

PĀRĀŚARAPRAŚNA

**THE BAISAKHI OF
GURU GOBIND SINGH**

KAPUR SINGH

EDITORS

PIAR SINGH AND MADANJIT KAUR



GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY, AMRITSAR.

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☺
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar
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PĀRĀŚARAPRAŚNA

An Enquiry into the Genesis and unique character of the
order of the Khalsa with an exposition of the Sikh Tenets

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DEDICATED
TO
THE ORDER OF THE KHALSA

ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੋ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਖਾਸ
ਖਾਲਸੇ ਮਹਿ ਹਓ ਕਰਉ ਨਿਵਾਸ
Sarab Loh Granth

FOREWORD TO THE THIRD EDITION

It is heartening to note that even in this age of crass materialism where readership is the first casualty, *Parasaraprasna* is in great demand and the University is bringing out its third edition. Late Sirdar Kapur Singh, National Professor of Sikhism had profound understanding of Sikhism. He could eloquently speak and felicitously write on any aspect of Sikh tenets, traditions and culture. The present work is the outcome of long scholarly discussions spanning over a year between Bhai Sahib and Sri Sardari Lal Parasara, his friend. Diverse issues cropped up during these discussions and Sirdar Kapur Singh cast fresh light upon these. The insights are, indeed, striking. At places he is provocative, but so indeed is every original thinker who unearths fresh furrows.

I am sure this work will go a long way in inspiring scholars and commoners alike in dedicated pursuit of study of Sikh religion and also of Comparative Theology as a discipline.

**Guru Nanak Dev University
Amritsar**

S.P. Singh
Vice-Chancellor

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ABBREVIATIONS

- BG Bhai Gurdas
- DG Dasam Granth
- GGs Guru Granth Sahib
- M Mahala
- MS Manuscript
- SK Sanskrit
- SPG *Gurpartap Surya Granth/Gurpartap Suraj Granth/Gur
pratapsuryodaya/Suraj Prakash*
- VBG *Varan Bhai Gurdas*

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EDITORS' NOTE

In writing his book, *Paraśarapraśna*, its author, Sirdar Kapur Singh, had drawn his material from a large number of sources and had, in doing so, stuck to the orthographic patterns followed by their authors without keeping in mind whether he was quoting them verbatim or was, simply, reporting the matter on his own. This had resulted in figuring of the same word in its different forms, side by side; for instance, Krishan, Krishna and Krshna, or Shiv, Shiva, śiva, or Muhammad, Mohammed and Mohamet. We have at all such places kept the character of the original source in mind and tried to bring about uniformity in their use to the extent it was possible, leaving at places, the *tatsama* and the *tadbhava*, both the forms, in tact. Similarly a word come from an antiquated source in its antique sense has been left untouched. Instances of these are the use of 'Sire' for 'Sir' and 'Mevalana', for 'Maulana'. At places we have been forced to use ś and sh for श and c and ch (even mere c) for च of the Sanskrit letters because of shortage of type with the requisite diacritical signs. For the facility of the readers a Key to Transliteration and Abbreviations stands added to the Book.

Sirdar Kapur Singh had in this book made profuse and repetitive use of capital letters to bring into focus certain concepts and phrases. While we have retained them at places where they were warranted, we have taken care to avoid unnecessary repetition and their futile use, though they may, even now, sound exuberant at places to a highly critical mind.

Sirdar Kapur Singh, as the readers will note, was fond of writing long sentences full of elliptical phrases and parenthetic subclauses. This tended to make his sentences unintelligible at places. We have sought to make them more intelligible by changing their sequence in the sentences concerned, or by readjusting their punctuation marks, all the time taking care not to disturb the tenure of his argument.

As it is, Sirdar Kapur Singh's style will appear to modern readers marred by classical stiffness. Yet, his credentials are irreproachable.

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He had not only produced a work of high scholarship in Sikh Studies but had also made serious efforts to promote comparative study of Oriental Mysticism.

The documentation of authorities depended upon and sources used by the author for producing this magnum opus has, indeed, been a very formidable task because of the very large number of works of all shades and major languages of the world involved, and because of the slipshod way in which the author had noted them. Though Prof. Pritam Singh, the sponsor of this book, and his team of workers consisting of Dr. K.L. Sharma and Shri Raghbir Singh Tak, had spent considerable labour on it, the work required a reappraisal, filling in of certain gaps, and recasting of various references. This having been done to the extent possible, the work still remains short of necessary information here and there. For this, we seek pardon of the reader, since the author is no longer with us to provide the much needed clues.

To facilitate location of a topic, we have, apart from the General Index, added a Subject Index which, we hope, the readers will find very useful.

We owe our sincere thanks to the very kind cooperation extended to us by Dr. K.L. Sharma and Dr. Shukdev Sharma of the Department of Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit, in checking Sanskrit quotations appearing in the book.

We are thankful to S. Gursharan Jit Singh, UGC Research Fellow, Department of Guru Nanak Studies for his ungrudging help rendered in the preparation of the index of the second edition of this book. Likewise, our thanks are due to the Director, Press & Publications, S. Jagjit Singh Walia, for the interest he took in the printing of this book. The printing of this Volume owes much to the efforts of S. Manmohan Singh Dhillon and his team, who have spent long hours in the arduous work of proof-reading. Without the enthusiastic cooperation and hardwork of the staff and workers of our University Press, this book could not have been brought in a short time. We are thankful to them all.

Piar Singh & Madanjit Kaur
Editors

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

It was in year 1949, precisely ten years ago, that the author of this book found himself in forced leisure and detention at Simla to which place he had come on two months' holiday. Circumstances lengthened this stay into a semi-permanent one and his peculiar situation encouraged and necessitated long walks for which the Simla parts of the Himalayas offer such wonderful opportunities. Long walks are good for making the ruffled mind tranquil and a tranquil mind faced with a crisis when the routine of life is suddenly upset, when the habitual adjustments are broken, and when one is turned into a floatsam of a disadjusted and displaced person asks fundamental questions and seeks satisfying answers to them.

The author was in this mood and these circumstances, when in 1950, he met his old friend, Sri Sardari Lal Paraśara M.A., the newly appointed Principal of the Government School of Arts at Simla, and Sri Paraśara then made it a practice to join the author in his long walks in the Himalayan woods and snows. It was on one of these walks in the same year that this book, *Paraśarapraśna*, or the Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh, took fortuitous birth. The author quoted from a Persian manuscript, the *Jangnameh* (A.D. 1765) by Qazi Nur Mohammad, which contains an account of the seventh invasion of Ahmed Shah Durrani, of which event he was an eye witness as a member of the invader's camp-following. In this manuscript, which was printed for the first time in 1939, the writer makes many interesting references to the Sikhs, whom his master had to encounter during this campaign more frequently than was strictly to his liking. The language of this manuscript is frankly that of an enemy of the Sikhs and Sikhism and the acerbity of his narrative is relieved only by generous praise of the Sikhs occasionally given. The quotation under reference said that,

'the Sikhs' religion and its practices originate from the teachings of Nanak, who founded their new religion. Gobind Singh, who was

a successor of Nanak, conferred upon them the title of 'Singh' and thus the Sikhs became the *Singhs*, the Lions. These dogs are not Hindus by religion or persuasion. These evil-doers have a way of life entirely different.¹

Although the author had not made this quotation in support of any thesis about the nature and status of Sikhism vis-a-vis Hinduism, for, the subject of talk was, writings by foreigners as sources of Indian History, yet Sri Paraśara reacted sharply towards this appraisal of Sikhism by Qazi Nur Mohammad and wanted to know, why this foreigner was interested in dividing Sikhism from Hinduism and, consequently, the Sikhs from the Hindus.

It was in answer to this question that the main thesis of this book took shape during many long walks and talks, spread over a period of almost a year and a half. In the beginning of 1952, the main body of the book, as it appears now in print, was written down in the form of mnemonic notes and memoranda, primarily at the request and for the personal use of Sri Paraśara.

Sri Paraśara is an exacting questioner, and once in about every couple of months, he used to find time from his own all-engrossing duties to meet and question the author on some point, arising out of the main thesis of this book, the type-script of which he, all along, had in his possession. The twelve Appendices, which now form an integral part of this book thus developed and eventually came to be written down, like the main thesis.

It was in 1954, that this book, as it is, was completed, and ever since it has been with the publishers and in the hands of the printers, who the latter, are responsible, in an active sense, for making changes in the body of the book, such as are only incompletely indicated in the considerable errata attached.

رُسوماتِ ایشان ز نانک فرود۔ جُدا گانہ را ہے بہ سیکھاں نمود
پس از وے خلف ماند گویند سنا۔ از دیا فتنہ ایں لقب سنا سنا
ازیں مہند ایں نیستہ ایں سرگاں۔ جُدا گانہ را بیت ایں بدرگاں

It is for the author to apologise to the reader, not only for the unplanned and fortuitous character of the subject matter of the book but also for its faulty production. The one he could help but had no time to rectify, and the other proved to be literally beyond his control. If and when there is to be another edition, the author hopes to remove both these blemishes.

It was on the Christmas eve of 1957 that Sri Paraśara confined to the author that he had come across a passage in a book of the world-famous historian, Arnold Toynbee, which confirmed certain interpretations, the author had previously made about the true character of Sikhism, particularly, the Order of the Khalsa. The passage in question is as follows :

The intensity of an alien intelligentsia's hatred of the Western Middle class gave the measure of its foreboding of its inability to emulate Western Middle class achievement. The classic instance, upto date, in which the embittering prescience had been justified, was the Russian intelligentsia's catastrophic failure, after the first two Russian Revolutions in 1917 to carry out its fantastic mandate to transform the wreck of the Petrine czardom into a parliamentary constitutional state in the 19th century Western style. The Kerensky regime was a fiasco because it was saddled with the task of making bricks with straw, of making a parliamentary government without having a solid, competent, prosperous and experienced Middle class to draw on. By contrast, Lenin succeeded, because he set himself to create something which would meet the situation. His All Union Communist Party was not, indeed, a thing entirely without precedent. In Islamic Muslim History it had been anticipated in the slave household of the Ottoman Padishah, in the Qyslbash fraternity of devotees of the Safawis, and the Sikh Khalsa that had been called into being by a decision to fight the Mughal ascendancy with its own weapons. In these Islamic and Hindu fraternities the ethos of the Russian Communist Party is already unmistakably discernible.²

It became necessary for the author to explain to Sri Paraśara at length as to what was the true character and ethos of the slave household of the Ottoman Padishah and what was the origin and character of the

² Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, (Abridged), pp. 187-188.

Qyslbash fraternity which made extreme sacrifices to uphold the national Safawi dynasty of Iran (1499-1736), and how the ethos, in the case of both of these, is fundamentally different from the true ethos of the Order of the Khalsa, of which ethos the Russian Communist Party unmistakably partakes. In the case of the slave household of the Ottoman Padishah, the loyalty of the former was wholly actuated by the knowledge that their position and material interests were inseparably bound up with continuation in power of the latter. The essence of their ethos is, therefore, enlightened self-interest, pure and simple. In the case of the Qyslbash loyalty towards the kings of the Safawi dynasty, the motive-base was communal gratitude and patriotism. Communal gratitude, because the Qyslbash had for their nucleus, the descendants of those Georgians who had been rescued from captivity of Timur, when taken as war prisoners in wars with Bayazid, through the intercession of the pious Sufi, Sheikh Saifuddin Ishaq and it was a great great grandson of the Sheikh, who founded the Safawi dynasty, by assuming the royal title of Shah of Persia in 1499, as Ismail I. Besides, the Safawis were truly, in origin and spirit Persians, which inevitably invoked national and patriotic sentiment in their favour, such as animated the Qyslbash fraternity. This is not to be confused with the deathless pledge and loyalty of the Khalsa to a universal Idea and Ideal, for the upholding and propagation of which the Khalsa is sworn to a dedicated life on this earth. It is something of this ethos which has inspired the Russian Communist Party of Lenin; and the Order of the Khalsa is, therefore, the latter's true prototype. Lenin's view that his party is an exception in the history of human societies, was mistaken, as is the view of Arnold Toynbee that the creation of the Order of the Khalsa was contingent phenomenon dictated by the exigencies of the moment, for it was a logical development and entelechy of the teachings of Guru Nanak revealed in certain *sutras* of the *Japu* itself, and fighting the Mughal ascendancy was an accident and not a cause.

Sri Paraśara frankly confessed that it was for the first time that he had listened to the author's such expositions of Sikhism with a mind completely free from scepticism, and that, previously, the author's ideas had always struck him as mostly newfangled. Such is the well deserved prestige which European scholarship enjoys in India.

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Remains it now for the author to record his thanks to Professor Pritam Singh, M.A., of the Mohindra College, Patiala, who not only found time from his multifarious duties and preoccupations to prepare the errata and the Index but also otherwise encouraged him to let the book see the light of the day in its present unkempt form. Dr. Mohan Singh, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., Head of the Punjabi Department of the Punjab University, Chandigarh, is well reputed for his learning and scholarship but his generosity of disposition is not so wellknown. The author feels honoured by the fact that Dr. Mohan Singh, has condescended to permit his name to be associated with this book, as its introducer.

Paraśarapraśna, the name of this book, meaning 'the Questions of Paraśara' is appropriate enough in view of the way this book came to be written, though there is no intention to suggest any comparison with the world-famous Pali book, *Milindapanha*, of the incomparable Nagsena. Its subtitle, 'The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh,' being the earlier of the two suggestions has also been retained for obvious reasons.

Kapur Singh

Simla, the 12th January, 1958

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

This book published first in 1959 was generously received by the public and for the last many years it has been out of print.

The demand for a second edition has been persistent and pressing for the past several years; and now I have mustered courage to apply my mind to revise the book for a new presentation.

Several changes and additions have been made in this new edition, such as suggested themselves, or were suggested by friends and by those not quite friendly to the main thesis of the book.

The sub-title, *The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh*, given in the First Edition has been dropped, as the original thesis under this title has now been converted into chapter I. The appendices of the first edition have been redesignated as 'chapters', so that the present edition has now thirteen chapters in all, a lucky and auspicious number in Sikhism, since *tera*, which means *thirteen*, as well as *Thine am I*, is an utterance making the first epiphany of the Sikh religion. In A.D. 1495, Nanak in his first unitive experience of God, while outwardly engaged in recording official counts of measures of grain-stores at Sultanpur, repetitively uttered this word in its non-numeral secondary meaning, completely disregarding official requirements of accuracy and accountancy.

The author hopes that the book might lead to a truer and deeper understanding of the Order of the Khalsa and the Sikh religion and their relevance to some of the problems that stir the mind of the modern intellectual.

A word about acknowledgements too. Almost every page of this book is under heavy debt to other and far superior minds and writers the undersigned has freely acknowledged in the footnotes and textual references in this book. That this debt is, indeed, far heavier, can best be acknowledged by referring to Terence (195-159 B.C.), a Roman playwright who, when accused of unacknowledged borrowings from the Greek dramatist, Menandar, replied : 'Nothing is ever said which

has not been said before', and by pointing out that this book is not an outcome of the sustained and disciplined academic labours of a professional writer to whom necessary library aids and assistance of trained scholar secretaries is normally available, but it is only a putting-together-in-book-form, a *samhita*, so to speak, of the fitful labours of a politician who has been naive enough to believe that warp and woof of politics is the right idea and not the grasping of power and who, by training is a mere civil servant, who was so simplistic as to think that, in a free India too, it was his duty to execute the validity formulated policies of the politicians in power, in accordance with the rules and the laws of the land, with the right to point out irregularities and improprieties and to indicate his stand, when necessary, in the Lutheran strain : Here I stand as my conscience bids, and I cannot act otherwise. So help me God.

It is in this background and with this understanding that the generous reader is requested to go through the pages of this book.

Tinjamin, Khajabaju,
Jagraon (Punjab)
25 May, 1975.

Kapur Singh

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION

Neither the author, an intellectual giant, nor this book, a *tour de force* of living adoration of the Master and a sincere and balanced and frank appraisal of the historical evolution of Sikhism needs any commendation from any one. If, all the same, I am going to say something, it is only to express my own gratitude and that of our community for this work and to lend the weight of my own humble thinking and research to his mature considerations.

Sirdar Kapur Singh, whom I have known since 1930, has had a very brilliant academic career. He got a first class first in Philosophy from the Panjab University, Lahore, and a Tripos in Moral Sciences from Cambridge with first position. In addition, he is a very sensitive original poet in Punjabi. Independence of thought and action has been the hall-mark of his life and for this he has suffered.

The Sikhs have been described by non-Indian observers as a separate nation, almost a separate race and Sikhism has been described as a spiritual republic, a spiritual democracy, a military democracy, by competent Western writers. To me, membership of the Order of the Khalsa is a prize which has to be won by an initiation which demands both saintliness and heroism, selfless public service as well as individual moral excellence.

In the first chapter, the author gives the dual esoteric and exoteric significance of the double-edged sword which Guru Gobind Singh used at the first initiation of the five candidates into his Order of the God's own, and states boldly that this Order claimed at its birth to be a new Way of life, the third *Panth*, a distinct people. He quotes Sir Charles Eliot who says that Guru Gobind Singh's ordinances were successful in creating a tribe, almost a nation. Significantly, the actual names of the first five initiates are miraculously symbolic, they being, the lion of dharma, the lion of *daya* or compassion, the lion of heroism, the lion of imperturbability, and the lion of self-mastery, three first names being Persian. In appendix one (present chapter II), Sirdar Kapur

Singh has undoubtedly sounded very deep depths and correlated Sikh initiation rite and ceremonial to the ancient Indian śaiva and Buddhist, Vedic and Muslim initiation ceremonies, initiation objectives and initiation pre-requisites. In appendix two (present chapter III), references are made to the "Hymn of Man" in the *Rgveda* and to Swedenborg's Theory of Correspondence which dates back to Egyptian and Sumer cultures. The author is at his best when he unveils the symbolic value of the hair and points out the reasons why the Guru forbade shingle and shaving, and only an inspired lover could have said, "The reasons why the Guru forbade shingle and shaving are grounded in the metaphysical postulates of transcendental aesthetics."

Appendix three (present chapter IV), deals with the commandment, "Thou shalt not smoke", and appendix four (present chapter V), gives the inner mental equivalences of the remaining three *kakars*. Here, too, the author has traced the ancestry of the Guru's three other commandments.

In discussing the Archetypal Form of Guru Gobind Singh, of which dark blue clothes, pure steel armour, the lance, the white hawk, the jewel-aigrette and the dark blue horse are the most significant, the author has almost excelled himself and I bow to him for the vast range of his comparative study of world mythology and world religions. I do not indulge in an hyperbole when I say that I have come across this range and this profundity in very few modern Indian writers. Appendix seven (present chapter VIII), is a monument of Sirdar Kapur Singh's spiritual wisdom. Under the heading "Parthenogenesis", the significance of the steel-stirred and sugar-sweetened water used in the Khalsa initiation is laid bare most convincingly.

The author is to be congratulated, for amongst other things, pointing out several bits of incorrect history and unwarranted interpretations made by some historians. A good deal in the chapters on "Sikh Raj" and "The Hindu Caste System" is a matter about which more than one historical interpretation is possible, but there is no room, no ground either, for factual contradiction or for an allegation of bias. The chapter on "Sikh Congregational Prayer," including a most

brilliant English rendering of the text of the prayer, must gladden the heart of every Sikh and strengthen his faith in the miracle working power of congregational prayer and worship, which is the pivot of Sikh social, political and spiritual living.

Let me end with the hope that Sirdar Kapur Singh's memorable contribution will receive the homage it amply deserves from all students of comparative study of religions in all parts of the world.

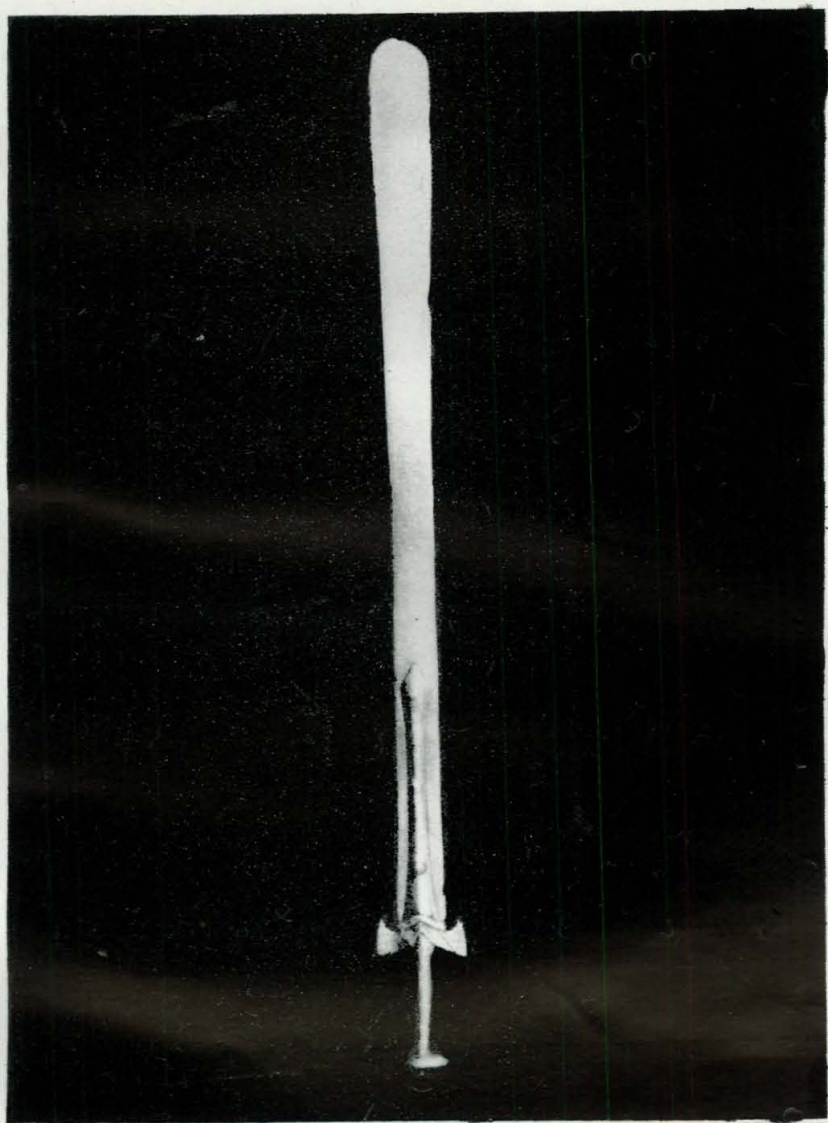
Panjab University,
Chandigarh
4.1.1959

Mohan Singh Diwana
M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt.
Head of the Punjabi Department

KEY TO TRANSLITERATION

| Gurmukhi/ Devanagari Sound 1 | Gra- pHEME 2 | Gurmukhi/ Devanagari Sound 3 | Gra- pHEME 4 | Arabic Sound (a few) 5 | Gra- pHEME 6 |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| ਅ ਅ | a | ਘ ਥ | gh | ث | s / th |
| ਆ ਆ | ā | ਙ ਙ | ñ | س/ص | s |
| ਇ ਈ | i | ਚ ਚ | ć / ch | ش | ś / sh |
| ਈ ਈ | ī | ਛ ਛ | ch/chh | ح | ḥ |
| ਉ ਊ | u | ਜ ਝ | j | ق | q / k |
| ਊ ਊ | ū | ਝ ਞ | jh | خ | kh / kh |
| ਏ ਏ | e | ਵ ਞ | ñ | ع | , with the vowel |
| ਐ ਐ | ai | ਟ ਟ | ṭ | | |
| ਓ ਓ | o | ਠ ਠ | ṭh | غ | gh |
| ਔ ਔ | au | ਡ ਡ | ḍ | ذ/ذ | z |
| ਅੰ ਅੰ | m̐ / ñ | ਢ ਢ | ḍh | ض/ظ | ẓ/ḍh |
| ਰਿ ਰਿ | ri / ṛ | ਣ ਣ | ṇ | و | w/v |
| ਸ ਸ | s | ਤ ਤ | t | ف | f |
| ਹ ਹ | h | ਬ ਥ | th | | |
| ਕ ਕ | k | ਦ ਦ | d | | |
| ਖ ਖ | kh | ਧ ਧ | dh | | |
| ਗ ਗ | g | ਨ ਨ | n | | |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|----|----|--------|---|
| ਪ | ਪ | ਲ | ਲ | l | |
| ਫ | ਫ | ਵ | ਵ | v / w | |
| ਬ | ਬ | ੜ | ੜ | r / d | |
| ਭ | ਭ | ਸ਼ | ਸ਼ | ś / sh | |
| ਮ | ਮ | ਜ | ਜ | z | |
| ਯ | ਯ | ਗ | ਗ | jñ | |
| ਰ | ਰ | ਖ | ਖ | ṣ | |
| | | ਕ | ਕ | kṣ | |



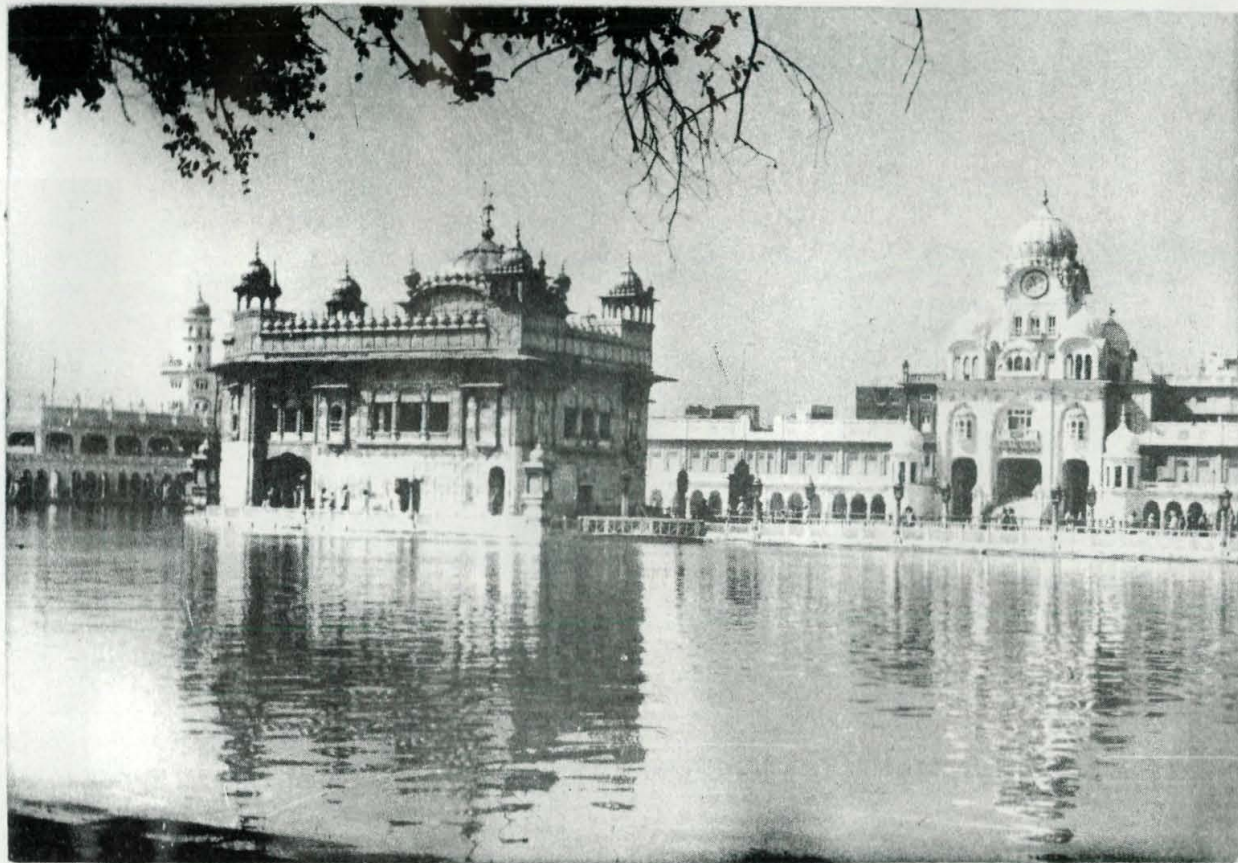
The Double-edged Sword used by Guru Gobind Singh for
administering Amrit (Plate I) (p. 1)



Bodhisattva Manjuśrī with a double-edged sword

(Note also the Chuda on his cranial eminence referred to on
p. 77 of this book)

(Courtesy Staatliche Museen, Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin)
(Plate II) (p. 3, fn. 3)

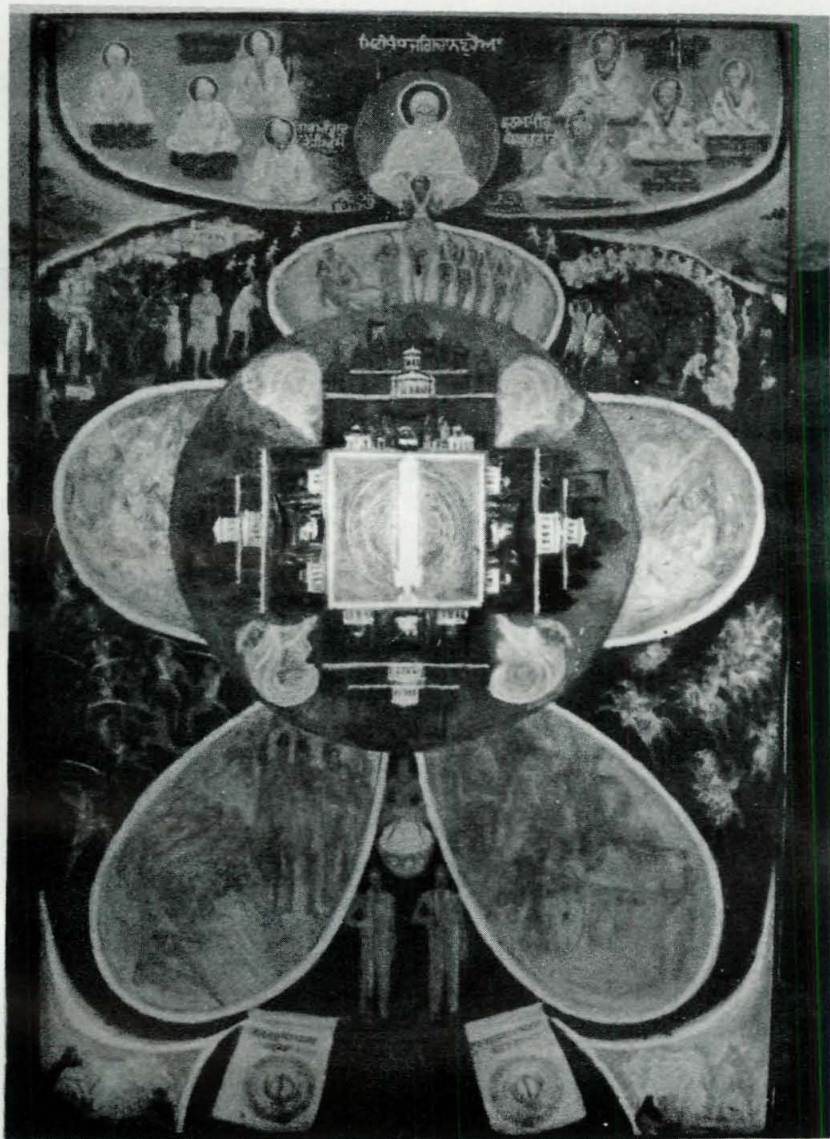


The Golden Temple at Amritsar (Note its Lake-cum brick structure)
(Plate III)

(p. 19)



Gangā - Jamunā
(Courtesy National Museum, New Delhi)



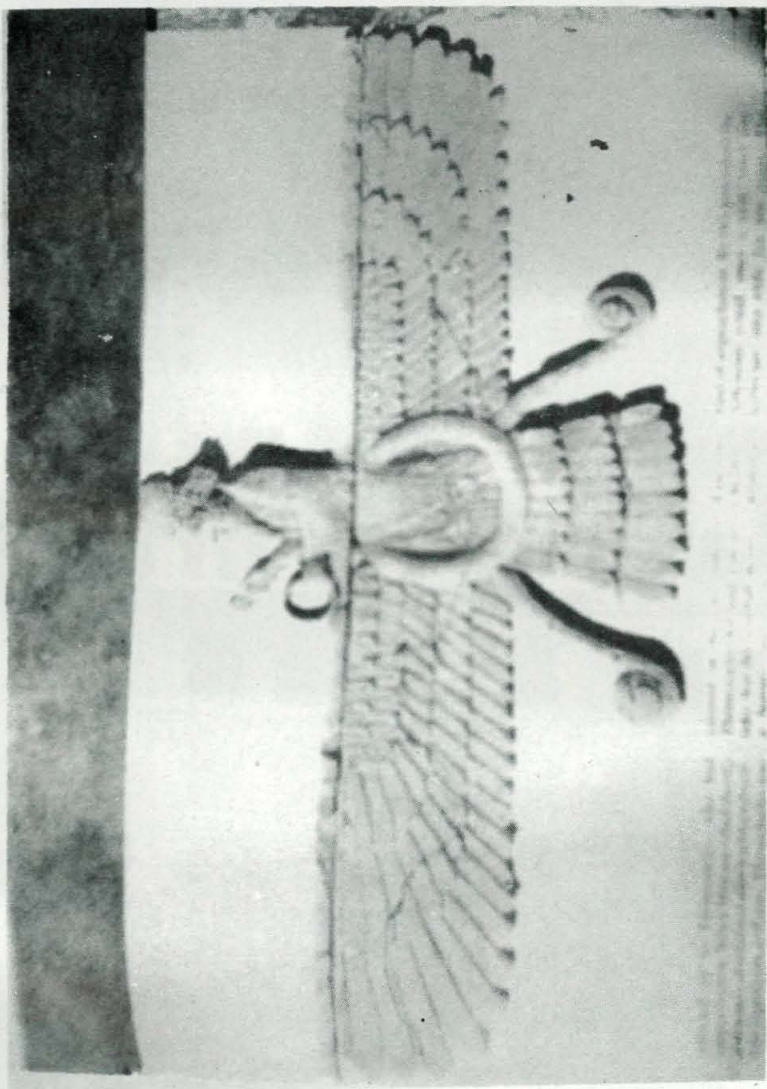
Sri Kesgarh Sahib—the Blessed Fort of the uncut hair
 (Plate V) (p. 75)



Alexander the Great of Mecedonia
(The fashion setter for shave and shingle)

(Plate VI)

(p. 78)



Ahuramazda Zoroastrion God

(p. 130)

(Plate VII)



The Akāl Takht

(Plate VIII)

(p. 229)

CHAPTER I

THE BAISAKHI OF GURU GOBIND SINGH

The manner in which Guru Gobind Singh gave proof of his thorough knowledge of the art of dramaturgy on the Baisākhi day, March 30 of A.D. 1699 (Julian Calendar), is fairly well-known, but not so the revolutionary ideas which inspired it. It is common knowledge that on this memorable Baisākhi day, Guru Gobind Singh

called a big meeting at Anandpur [Sāhib]. When all were seated, he drew out his sword and cried, 'Is there anyone here who would lay down his life for dharma?' At this the whole assembly was thrown into consternation, but the Guru went on repeating his demand. At the third call, Daya Ram, a Khatri of Lahore [Central Punjab side], rose from his seat and offered himself. The Guru took him into an adjoining enclosure . . . [and soon after] came out with the [blood-] dripping . . . [sword in hand] and flourishing it before the multitude asked again, 'Is there any other Sikh here who will offer himself as a sacrifice [for the cause of dharma]?' At this Dharam Das, a Jat of Delhi [Haryana side] came forward and was taken into the enclosure. . . . [The Guru again came out with the blood-stained sword, and made his previous demand]. In the same way three other men stood up, one after another, and offered themselves for the sacrifice. One was Muhkam Chand, a washerman of Dwarka [Gujarat State]; another was Himmat, a cook of Jagannath [Orissa State]; and the third was Sahib Chand, a barber of Bedar [Mysore State]. The Guru, after dressing the five in handsome clothes, brought them before the assembly.¹

These five were then administered, what is known as the Baptism of the Double-edged Sword (*khaṇḍe dī pāhul*), and were then knighted

¹ Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, p. 68.

as *singhs*, as the Five Beloved Ones, the first members of the Order of the Khalsa, into which the Guru himself begged to be admitted, and was baptised and initiated as the sixth.

One Sohan Lāl Sūrī was an official in the secretariat of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, employed as the royal historiographer. He has left a comprehensive history of the Sikhs, called the *Umdat-ut-Tawārikh*. It was subsequently published in five volumes by the British rulers of the Punjab in the nineties of the last century. Incidentally, as it now appears, this Sohan Lāl Sūrī was, throughout, a secret paid agent of the Hon'ble East India Company, with their headquarters at Calcutta, receiving a high regular salarium of Rupees one hundred and twenty five per mensem, which at the annexation of the Punjab, was commuted into a pension, "eternal, to continue generation after generation", but which eventually terminated when Punjab was partitioned in 1947. Aḥmad Shāh Baṭālā, a man of letters, wrote his *Tawārikh-i-Hind* in A.D. 1818, which is still in manuscript form, but a portion of which was published as an appendix to the first volume of the *Umdat-ut-Tawārikh* of Sohan Lāl Sūrī in 1880. Another historian, Būṭe Shāh alias Ghulām Muhiuddin, has written a comprehensive history of the Sikhs, which also is still in manuscript form, and which bears the date of its completion as the year A.D. 1848, the days which saw the last flickers of the Sikh Empire. Both the Muslim historians record, almost identically, that on this memorable occasion, after the Guru had baptised the Five Beloved Ones and knighted them as *singhs*, as the first members of the Order of the Khalsa, he addressed the great gathering of the Sikhs and said, among other things :

I wish you all to embrace one creed and follow one path, rising above all differences of the religions as now practised. Let the four Hindu castes, who have different dharmas laid down for them in the śāstras (containing institutes of *varṇāśramadharma*), abandon them altogether and adopting the way of mutual help and co-operation, mix freely with one another. Do not follow the old scriptures. Let none pay homage to the Gaṅgā and other places of pilgrimage which are considered to be holy in the Hindu religion, or worship the Hindu deities such as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Brahmā, Durgā, etc., but all should cherish faith in the teachings of Guru

Nānak and his successors. Let men of the four castes receive my Baptism of the Double-edged Sword, eat out of the same vessel, and feel no aloofness from or contempt for one another.²

As already mentioned, when the Guru had administered baptism to the Five Beloved Ones, he stood up before them with folded hands and, as Būte Shāh also testifies, begged them to baptise him in the same way as he had baptised them, so that he, the Guru, too, may become a disciple and a member of the Order of the Khalsa.

According to both these Muslim historians, one of whom wrote before the Sikh sovereignty in the Punjab was established, and the other after it was extinguished, concur in stating that during the first few days after this memorable Baisākhi, some eighty thousand men received the Baptism of the Double-edged Sword³ to join the Order of the Khalsa.

Sikh authors of *Sri Guru Sobhā* and *Gurpratāp Sūrya Granth* popularly called *Sūraj Prakāś*, both recount that the first ordinance which the Guru issued to the Sikh congregations throughout India, including the congregations in Assam, Ghazni and Kābul, was to the

² Sohan Lal Sūri, *Umdat-ut-Tawārikh*, I, p. 5; and Būte Shah *Tawārikh-i-Punjab* (Persian), pp. 405-406.

³ *Saddharmapundarika*, ch. I, where the *Bodhisattva*, Manjuśrī, is described as "bearing a double-edged sword, that clean discriminating weapons." There is a remarkable likeness between the double-edged sword preserved at Takht Kesgarh, Anandpur Sahib, as the identical sword with which Guru Gobind Singh stirred the baptismal waters on March 30, 1699, and the double-edged sword, shown as held in the right hand of bronze *padmasana* image of Manjuśrī sculptured in Java, in the seventh century, now preserved in Berlin Museum. It is reproduced in Grünwedel's *Buddhist Art in India*, which has been translated into English by Gibson, 1901, p. 200.

Compare this esoteric significance of the double-edged sword with the exhortation of Guru Gobind Singh to the Khalsa bidding them to "take up the sword of true knowledge in hand and destroy the illusion and ignorance of the mind, from the very roots":

ਗਿਆਨੁਹਿ ਕੀ ਬਢਨੀ ਮਨਹੁ ਹਾਥ ਲੈ ਕਾਤਰਤਾ ਕੁਤਵਾਰ ਬੁਹਾਰੈ।

Kṛṣṇāvatār, DG, p. 570.

Also compare with the *Bhagavadgītā* :

तस्मादज्ञान संभूतं हतस्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।

चित्तैव संशयं योगमतिष्ठोतिष्ठ मारत ॥ (iv. 42)

[With the sword of true knowledge cut out the roots of the nescience and perplexities that invade the mind.]

following effect :

In future the Sikhs should come into my presence wearing long hair. Once a Sikh is baptised, he should never trim his hair or shave. He should not use tobacco, or psychedelic intoxicants that confuse or mutate intellectual comprehension, and all Sikhs should henceforth receive the Baptism of the Double-edged Sword.

Be it remembered however, for the current impression is to the contrary and thoroughly mistaken, that although the Baptism of the Double-edged Sword was in the nature of a modification of, and not an innovation on the accepted forms and usages ordained by the predecessor Gurus, the other injunctions, regarding abstinence from tobacco, abuse of intoxicants and shaving and trimming of the hair, were mere reiterations with enhanced emphasis on their drastic and draconian observance. There is ample testimony in the meagre Sikh contemporary records and writings that, from the very beginning, from Guru Nānak onwards, almost all the Gurus gave indications, sufficiently clear, that the type of the Man and the Society at which they were aiming, must wear uncut hair as the veritable symbol and testament of their spiritual integrity.

This, in short, is what happened on the Baisākhī of March 30, 1699, and this is the beginning of the Order of the Khalsa, which from its very birth has claimed the status of a new way of life, the third *panth*, a separate community, and a distinct people, from the two ways of life, already known and largely practised by the peoples of East and West and the inhabitants of India, the way of the Aryans represented by Hinduism and its heterodox forms Buddhism and Jainism, and the Semitic way of life represented, primarily, by the Christians and the Mussulmans. That such was the unambiguous claim made for his new order of the Khalsa by the Guru himself, cannot be in doubt, as the Guru's own assertions on this point amply support the testimony of the contemporary non-Sikh historians and writers :

The Semitic scriptures and the Aryan sacred books speak of many viewpoints, the authority of which I do not accept. And, likewise,

the exegetic commentaries on these texts bring out subtle niceties of thought, which I do not regard as significant.⁴

That such has been the stout belief and the basic impulse of the Sikhs and their history can be readily ascertained by any dispassionate person who would take pains to enquire with an open mind.

That such a claim, when brusquely made by a Sikh, puzzles and annoys many honest, politically oversensitive Hindus, is easily the most unfortunate phenomenon of the recent history of India. Nor is this opposition of opinion confined to Indians, Sikhs and non-Sikhs. The foreigners, the Europeans, with exceptionally trained critical faculties and equipped with scientific intellects and well-informed minds, have also reflected this divergence of opinion about the Sikhs and Sikhism, and they also easily fall into the two groups formed by Indians on this issue. The scholarly author of *Hinduism and Buddhism*, Sir Charles Eliot, concludes that Guru Gobind Singh's "ordinances were successful in creating a tribe, almost a nation."⁵ On the other hand, Arnold Toynbee in his monumental work, *A Study of History*, quite simply asserts that the Sikhs "are virtually a caste of the Hindus."⁶

It is, therefore, not without profit to consider and analyse the basic ideas and their implications which underline the happenings of the Baisākhi of March 30, 1699, as celebrated by Guru Gobind Singh at the sub-mountain town of Anandpur Sahib in the Indian Punjab.

What were these ideas to which Guru Gobind Singh tried to give concrete expression on this day of Baisākhi?

It would seem that these basic concepts were five in number, symbolic of and synchronous in their configuration and *gestalt*, though not in their origin and introduction, with the Five Beloved Ones whom the Guru initially created into his Order of the Khalsa.

⁴ ਰਾਮ ਰਹੀਮ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਅਨੇਕ ਕਹੈ ਮਤ ਏਕ ਨ ਮਾਨਯੋ।
ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਬੇਦ ਸਭੇ ਬਹੁ ਭੇਦ ਕਹੈ ਹਮ ਏਕ ਨ ਜਾਨਯੋ।

Rāmavatār, DG, p. 254.

⁵ Charles Eliot, Sir, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, II, p. 272.

⁶ Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, VII, p. 415.

These five ideas are : (1) the absorption of the individual soul into or its contiguity with the Infinite Soul, as the ultimate aim and *summum bonum* of human life, and, as a corollary, religion and religious activity being the activity *par excellence*, worthy of serious minds; (2) an equalitarian and global fraternity in which this activity must be grounded and into which this ideal must permeate; (3) acceptance of new principles of politics, subordinated to those of ethics, resulting in the universal acceptance of the tradition of open diplomacy; (4) organisation into the Order of the Khalsa of those who agree to dedicate their lives to and are competent for furtherance of these ideas; and (5) the vision of a new and regenerated humanity, heralded by the Baisākhī of March 30, 1699, and symbolised by the day of Baisākhī.

By understanding these five ideas alone, which stimulated the basic impulses of the work and teachings of Guru Gobind Singh, it is possible to understand the temper and soul of the Sikh history, and the true significance of Guru Gobind Singh as a religious prophet.

It is hardly necessary to go into the details of what the *summum bonum*, as conceived by the best of the Hindu minds throughout the ages, has been. It conceives of true philosophy as a discipline which fully takes into account the mystical experience and arrives at its formulations accordingly. It conceives of the ultimate reality as that which is the ground of the diversity of the conditioned existence, which is our phenomenal universe. *Mokṣa*, the liberation from this conditioned existence, is that which every serious-minded person ought to aim at. All the cults, *darśanas* and philosophies of India, throughout the ages, represent a quest for ways and means of achieving such liberation. All the Gurus, from Guru Nānak to Guru Gobind Singh, agreed with and accepted the axioms underlying such a quest, namely, the fundamental concepts of Brahma and samsāra. Along with the other savants of the Hindu race, the Gurus also accepted these concepts as self-evident and, therefore, they agree with the basic Hindu faith that the paramount duty of human individual is to pursue ways and means to demolish the partition which separates the Brahma

and the samsāra. In the very first stanza of the *Japu*, Guru Nānak poses the question : "How shall then the Truth be attained and the partition of falsity demolished?"⁷ His answer is :

Now that human birth has been granted to you, this is the opportunity for you to meet your Lord, the God. All other pursuits are irrelevant.⁸

Viewed thus, Sikhism is basically of Hindu genius.

The most fundamental and startling departure, however, which the Sikh Gurus have made, is from the social philosophy of Hinduism and this is what conspicuously divides the people, who fall under the category of Hinduism, in its specific sense, and those who go under the name of the Sikhs. To define Hinduism as a religion and as a culture, has been a most difficult task, as scholars and students have repeatedly found for themselves. It has been recognised generally that Hinduism has four facets : (1) it is an ethnical and racial group, (2) it represents a group of highly complex philosophic ideas, (3) it stands for certain broad and distinguishable religious and social practices, and (4) it is grounded in a distinct and peculiar social organisation. Ethnically and racially, modern Hinduism, that is, the Hinduism which took its final shape in the age of Imperial Guptās of the third and fourth centuries of the Christian era, and which had its inception and growth in the preceding seven or eight hundred years coeval with the rise and growth of Buddhism in India, is rooted in and confined to the peninsula of India, the Bhāratavarṣa, that geographical unit of the ancient Hindu cosmology called the Jambudvīpa, the region bounded by the Himalayas in the north, and by sea on the other three sides :

The country that lies north of the ocean and south of the snowy

⁷ ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ॥

Japu, GGS, p. 1.

⁸ ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਗੀਆ॥
ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਣ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ॥
ਅਵਰਿ ਕਾਜ ਤੇਰੈ ਕਿਤੇ ਨ ਕਾਮ॥ . . .

Asā, M 5, Ibid, p. 12.

mountains is called Bhārata and there alone dwell the descendants of Bhārata, that is true Hindus.⁹

In this blessed region, "A human may take birth only through the extraordinary grace of God."¹⁰ And, let it be understood clearly that:

A birth, even though a hundred times repeated, is utterly worthless and and pointless, if it is in a region other than India.¹¹

Sikhism as preached by the Gurus is definitely and completely at variance with this facet of true Hinduism, as the former clearly preaches and visualises a universal culture and religion, which knows of no ethnicity or any regional limitation of origin or habitat.

"The human race, essentially, is a universal brotherhood—racist, sectarian or colour distinctions are not to be deemed as fundamental,"¹² says Guru Gobind Singh. This attitude, this declaration, is a fundamental departure from the fundamentalist angle of Hinduism, nor can it be legitimately described as the reassertion of the older, Vedic, and heterodox Buddhist aspirations regarding eligibility of the whole human race to the Truths which are pure and exclusive discovery of the genius of the Hindu race? This re-assertion of the older heterodox attitude of willingness to admit into the spiritual fold of Hinduism the whole of humanity, finds its most lofty and philosophical exposition in the writings of the modern Śrī Aurobindo. Śrī Aurobindo represents

⁹ उत्तर यत्समुद्रस्य हिमाद्रश्चैव दक्षिणम् ।
वर्षं तद्धारतं नाम भारती यत्र सन्ततिः ।

¹⁰ कृष्णानुग्रहतो लब्ध्वा मानवम् जन्म भारते ।

¹¹ अन्य स्थाने वृथा जन्म निष्फलञ्च गतागतम् ।

Visnupurana ॥३॥

¹² ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਕੋਊ ਰਾਵਨੀ ਇਮਾਮ ਸਾਫੀ ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਸਭੈ ਏਕੋ ਪਰਚਾਨਬੋ।

Akalustat, DG, p. 19.

It is the ancient Chinese wisdom of Confucius that "all men constitute a single family", which is echoed by Prophet Mohammad in the *Qur'an* (11 : 20) that, "All human beings belong to the same community" (2 : 213). This doctrine is forcefully repeated again and again in the *Qur'an* (11 : 119, 16 : 94 and 43 : 34), which made it the most forceful catalyst in the historical emergence of a cohesive international Muslim community. No doubt, by upholding this doctrine, the Guru had intended it to form the foundation of the global egalitarian community that is implicit in the basic schemata of the Order of the Khalsa.

this older and heterodox tradition that the Truth capable of saving the humanity is and shall be the product of Hindu genius for ever, and for ever, and that through this Truth alone the Humanity shall, eventually, be saved.¹³ The belief, common to The heterodox systems of Buddhism and Jainism, that a *Buddha* and a *Tirthankara*, can only arise and teach in India, is here merely re-echoed by this modern upholder of the Upanishadic tradition, Aurobindo of Pondicherry. The Sikh Gurus, which is the same thing as Guru Gobind Singh, stand for a different, more amplified belief and a different vision of the future world culture. They preach the doctrine of a growing culture, coming to fruition through a process of synthetic growth, mutual assimilation and emergent evolution of the truths, revealed in the consciousness of the mankind as a whole :

The Semitic and the Aryan soul, and all that is heterodox besides, spring from the same All-Ground impulse and source and are converging towards the same goal.¹⁴

Such is the declaration which Guru Gobind Singh makes.¹⁵

The second facet of Hinduism is a *gestalt*-group of certain basic philosophic concepts; and, in our view, such basic concepts are four in number, which permeate throughout and ferment Hinduism, as its warp and woof and as its elan vital.

These are : (1) the doctrine of Karma, (2) the doctrine of Transmigration or Metempsychosis, (3) the doctrine of Dharma, and (4) the doctrine of Maya.

¹³ *Mother India* (February, 1952), Pondicherry, p. 7; Śrī Aurobindo, *Life Divine*, Vol. I, ch. I.

¹⁴ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰੀਮ ਸੋਈ ਰਾਜਕ ਰਹੀਮ ਓਈ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਨ ਭੇਦ ਕੋਈ ਭੂਲ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਮਾਨਬੋ॥
ਏਕ ਹੀ ਕੀ ਸੇਵ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਏਕ ਏਕ ਹੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਸਭੇ ਏਕੈ ਜੋਤ ਜਾਨਬੋ॥

Akalustat, DG, p. 19.

¹⁵ Compare also the earlier declaration of the Sikh theologian, Bhai Gurdas (1558-1637) :

ਬਾਹਰ ਪੰਥ ਇਕਤ੍ਰ ਕਰਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਗਾਡੀ ਰਾਹੁ ਚਲਾਇਆ॥

i.e. "Sikhism is a confluence of all the Aryan, Semitic and other creeds, which now converge into this Royal Road."

VBG, 18.14.

The doctrine of Karma is, what the modern science calls the law of cause and effect, but on the moral plane. The doctrine of Transmigration is the belief in the resurrectional continuity of the essence of human personality, irrespective of physical births and deaths. The doctrine of Dharma is the identity of the moral categorical imperative with the inner essence of the things and persons, and the doctrine of Maya is the conviction that what the world of existence reveals to us through our senses and mind is not real, but misleading and illusory.

Sikhism accepts all these four basic philosophic concepts, though these concepts are, in some fundamental respects, interpreted differently and evaluated otherwise than in the various sects and schools of Hinduism. Viewed thus, Sikhism might appear as essentially and basically a Hindu religion. The scope of this short thesis would not permit any detailed discussion of such differences that mark and distinguish the Sikh philosophical thought from the main current of the Hindu traditional thought in respect of these four metaphysical concepts.

Grounded in and arising out of these four philosophic concepts are the ways of life, the cults, the traditions of religion, which constitute the main limbs of Hindudom. These traditions are represented by four main currents in the river of Hinduism, which is the third facet of Hinduism, and every philosophic system, every *darśana* or view of reality, every Hindu orthodoxy, falls under or subserves one of these four traditions. They are : (1) Smārta, (2) Vaiṣṇava, (3) Śaiva, and (4) Śākta.

In the Smārta tradition, the fundamental spiritual activity consists of *yajna*, the sacrifice, through which the super-human forces are sought to be appeased and harnessed to human welfare. This is the Vedic cult *par excellence*, for it is the *kṛyā*, the performance of a ritual that not only channels and directs the forces of the spiritual world, but this *kṛyā*, the correct ritual, correctly and duly performed, also sustains it and, for want of it, the cosmos may face the danger of unwinding, retrogression, liquidation and disintegration. The *Brāhmaṇa* texts which first systematised the theory behind Vedic ritualism, assert that these ceremonial observances, the *yajna*, control the

processes of nature and even gods. In Mimāṃsā philosophy which first formulated the pattern in metaphysical form, it is emphasised that knowledge is fruitless, good deeds in vain, and true happiness impossible without *yajna*. The basic activity of this *yajna* rests on its fundamental doctrine of the *mantra* which postulates that the essences of things are represented by the words, the *Śabda*. The *Yajurveda*, compiled mainly from the *Rgvedic* hymns but showing considerable variations from the original texts, is the fundamental text-book of the Smārta cult. In this *Yajurveda* tradition the religion becomes an entirely mechanical ritual in which crowds of priests conduct complicated ceremonies, primarily through chanting of *mantras*, whose effects are felt in the farthest heavens through generation of a spiritual potency, *apūrva*, which is indestructible. The underlying principles of the *yajna*, resting on the belief of the power of the priests to do or undo the cosmic order itself, strike the modern scientific mind as 'ravings of mental delirium', as some European scholars of Vedic literature have irreverently referred to them.

The *Yajurveda*, now, consists of two recensions, *Saṁhitās*, the Black and the White, the *Taittiriya* and the *Vājasaneyī*, respectively. Pompous German Sanskrit scholars¹⁶ speak of the Black *Yajur* texts as 'undigested jumble of different pieces' having a 'motley character', and 'ravings of mental delirium'.¹⁷

The idea of potency of sound, emerging out of speculations about the relation of a word and the thing it represents, does not appear to be specifically Indo-Aryan, for its traces are found in almost all civilisations, but its best exposition is given by the Mimāṃsā school which, in the second century B.C., revived the verbal mysticism of the Smārta vedic tradition and maintained that every word was the reflection of an eternal prototype; and this genre of speculation Guru Gobind Singh specifically repudiates.¹⁸

¹⁶ Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, Introduction.

¹⁷ Von Schroeder, *Indien : Literatur und Kultur in Historischer Entwicklung*, p. 113.

¹⁸ ਜਾਪ ਕੇ ਕੀਏ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਧੇ ਘਾਝਤ ਅਜਾਪ ਦੇਵ ਪ੍ਰਦਨਾ ਸਦੀਵ ਤੁਹੀ ਤੁਹੀ ਉਚਰਤ ਹੈ॥

Akalustat, DG, p. 19.

This tradition, this way of life, was superseded by the post—Vedic thought contained in the Upanishads, and since then, that is, since about 1000 B.C., the proto-historic period of Hinduism, this tradition and this way of life, with its philosophic doctrine of the *mantra*, has not found any large number of direct adherents in Hinduism; and even the Ārya Samāj movement in north India, which apparently declares its undivided loyalty to the pristine Vedic way of life, in practice, accepts these bases of Vedic religion with considerable mental reservations. Sikhism is grounded in the post-Vedic Upanishadic tradition and ways of thought in so far as this aspect of Hinduism is concerned. There seems to be, however, one curious exception which places Sikhism, particularly as finalised by Guru Gobind Singh, in line with this Smārta tradition. The ceremony of what is called, *akhaṇḍpāth* practised amongst the Sikhs and claiming the approval and authority of Guru Gobind Singh himself,¹⁹ is apparently a Vedic ceremony of *yajna*, based upon the doctrine of *mantra*. Just as the Vedic sacrificial performance requires the attendance of officiating priests, the *hotṛ*, the *udgātṛ*, the *adhvaryu* and the *brahmā*, the *akhaṇḍpāth* ceremony requires four readers, and the continuous and un-interrupted reading of the *Guru Granth* apparently proceeds on the doctrine of the *mantra*. But here the resemblance ends, and on closer examination, the *akhaṇḍpāth* ceremony is found to partake of Tibetan and Far Eastern Buddhist practices :

where religious chapel services consist not of prayers, but of recitations of scripture by which merit is acquired. This merit is then formally transferred by the officiants to some special object, such as the peace of the dead or the prosperity of the living suppliant.²⁰

It is known that chanting or reading of sacred *sutra* is an ancient Buddhist practice and it is deemed as worship in speech. An Eastern order of monks in Christianity (fifth-sixth c.) also were known as

¹⁹ The Sikh annals have nothing authentic to substantiate this view. Even the citation in f.n. 18 above, negates this. The practice, very likely, originated much after Guru Gobind Singh's quitting the scene—editors.

²⁰ Charles Eliot, Sir, *op. cit.*, I, pp. LXXXV-VI.

Padmapurāṇa, II.257.40-41.

acoemeti (Greek : *akoimetos*, sleepless), for, they kept divine service going on, day and night, by alternating choirs. This too was the Mahāyāna Buddhist practice prevalent in Central Asia in the early Christian centuries.

In these Buddhist and Christian practices, which seem to be the true prototype of the Sikh *akhaṇḍpāth*, the temper and the doctrine sustaining the same is basically different from the Vedic *yajna* and recitation of ritual *mantras*, for, in the former the doctrine is that recitation of the scripture is worship in speech which makes the practice a truly religious supplication, while in the latter doctrine the possibility is of coercion and control of spiritual powers of nature, and the temper is that of manipulation which renders it as non-religious magic.

The second tradition of Hinduism is represented by Vaiṣṇavism, the basic propositions of which are, (a) that Viṣṇu, the Preserver of the Universe, incarnates Himself, not necessarily in human form, but quite often in sub-human forms, from age to age, to re-establish virtue and to destroy evil, to re-establish *Varṇāśramadharma* in fact, as the *Bhagavadgītā* tells us, and (b) that the mortals may achieve emancipation only through loving adoration of any one of these incarnations which are counted as ten in number.²¹ These propositions are repudiated completely and without ambiguity by the Sikh Gurus :

A hundred curses on the man who holds and declares that God incarnates.²²

Neither to Kṛṣṇa nor to Viṣṇu do I render homage or worship, for, though I have heard of them, I know them not.²³

The Hindu divinity, Rāma and the Muslim God, Raḥīm, and, likewise, the Hindu scriptures, the Purāṇas, and the Muslim

²¹ मत्स्यकूर्मं वराह च नरसिंहो अथ वामनः ।।

रामो रामश्च कृष्णश्च बुद्धः कल्किश्च ते दशाः ।।

Padmapurāṇa, II.257.40-41

²² ਸੋ ਮੁਖੁ ਜਲਉ ਜਿਤੁ ਕਹਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਜੋਨੀ।

Bhairo, M 5, GGS, p. 1136.

²³ ਕਿਸਨ ਬਿਸਨ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨਹ ਧਿਆਉ॥ ਕਾਨ ਸੁਨੇ ਪਹਿਚਾਨ ਨ ਤਿਨ ਸੋ॥

Kṛṣṇavataṛ (Kabiobach Benati Chaupai), *DG*, p. 310.

scripture, the *Qur'ān*, I accept them neither as worthy of homage and worship, nor as authority. And there are many schools and fine metaphysical distinctions formulated in respect of the Vedas, the Śāstras and the *Smṛtis*, the primary sacred books, their exegesis in many ways, as well as the sacred law-manuals. I accept the final authority of none of these.²⁴

The True Man hereby truly utters this Truth : he who is subject to birth and death is not perfect.²⁵

Thus those who see in the origin and contents of the Sikh movement anything of this Vaiṣṇavism or the historical Bhakti movement of the Middle ages, which was based on this Vaiṣṇavism or cognate propositions, show a complete lack of understanding of the real nature of Sikhism. Beyond the fact that Sikhism is of historical proximity to this Bhakti movement of the Middle ages, and that it somewhat partakes of the atmosphere and temper of Vaiṣṇavist climate, it has not much in common with the latter. Among the principal features of this climate are its anti-Brahmanical attitude, its preference for vernaculars²⁶ over Sanskrit, its total surrender theory, such as Lokācārya's *mārjāra*²⁷ doctrine, its stress on devotion through image-worship rather than through knowledge, and its own peculiar forms of ritualism, such as caste-marks.

²⁴ ਰਾਮ ਰਹੀਮ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਅਨੇਕ ਕਹੈ ਮਤ ਏਕ ਨ ਮਾਨਯੋ॥
ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਬੇਦ ਸਭੈ ਬਹੁ ਭੇਦ ਕਹੈ ਹਮ ਏਕ ਨ ਜਾਨਯੋ॥

Ibid., p. 254.

²⁵ ਤਤੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਕਹੈ ਜਨੁ ਸਾਚਾ॥ ਜਨਮਿ ਮਰੈ ਸੋ ਕਾਚੋ ਕਾਚਾ॥

Gauri, Sukhmani, M 5, GGS, p. 288.

²⁶ The principle that every man might read Buddha's word in his own vernacular, was accepted early in Buddhism (*Chullavagga*, V.33). In Sikhism this principle was unreservedly owned up from the very beginning.

²⁷ माज्जरिः किल दुष्टात्मा निश्चेष्टः सर्वकर्मसु ।
दम्भार्थं जपते यश्च तप्यते तथा यचते तथा ।
न परगार्थमुद्युक्तो माज्जरिः परिकीर्तितः ॥

Vamanapurāṇa, 236.

It is easy to demonstrate that similarities of Sikhism with some of these features are not so intimate or fundamental as to suggest any direct or indirect borrowing.

The chief landmarks of the historical development of Vaiṣṇavism with reference to its literature, and particularly its lesser subjects, illustrate the point.

Pañcharātra Āgamas of Śaṇḍilya (A.D. 100), *Nārāyaṇyānugītā* and *Harivaṁśa* (A.D. 500)—all now embodied in the *Mahābhārata*—, the hymns of the early Āḷvārs (A.D. 650), the *Bhagavadgītā* (A.D. 750), the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (A.D. 800) and the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (A.D. 900)²⁸ are the milestones in this sacred literature's development. With Śāṅkara, Vaiṣṇavism received a temporary setback, but the movement was reinstated by Rāmānuja (c. 1017-1137) 'who brought the soul back to Hindu philosophy', and its progress thereafter was unimpeded.

Among the lesser Vaiṣṇavites are the Haridāsa sect whose devotional songs were written by the saints of Karnāṭaka; its creed is based on the Dvaita system of Mādhava (1197-1200), the Śrivaishṇava of the Tamil country, who recognise all the 24 incarnations of Viṣṇu, the Sahajiyā who stress the Rādhākṛṣṇa aspect and often tend to antinomianism, beyond good and evil, the Kiśoribhaja, who practise a form of religious sexualism and virgin-worship, and the Sakhibhāva, who indulge in homosexuality as a religious discipline.

²⁸ These dates are acceptable to western scholars and indologists, while Hindu scholarship would recede these dates often to a thousand years in most cases. Here is one illustration : Ādi Śāṅkarācārya, the sun of Hindu metaphysics and the chief architect of Vedānta, is held as having been born at Chidambaram in 44 B.C. by his biographer, Anandagiri, and his death is given by him in 12 B.C. Telāṅga places him in 6th century, while Bhaṇḍārkar believes that he was born in A.D. 680. Professor Keith would place him in the early 9th century, while Venkaṭeśwara would have him lived for 92 years from A.D. 805 to A.D. 897, mainly on the ground that such stupendous work as Ādi Śāṅkarācārya is credited with, could not possibly have been accomplished in 32 years, the traditional life-span of the great savant. The currently accepted view which is supported by Max Müller, Macdonell, Pathak, Deussen and Rādhakrishnan is that Ādi Śāṅkarācārya was born in Kalad in Kerala in A.D. 780, and in A.D. 820 he entered a cave in Kedāmath to disappear for ever.

The afore-mentioned Sahjiyā tendency towards antinomianism, *nirdharma*, is by no means a peculiar or exclusive characteristic of this development of Vaiṣṇavism; it has an ancient ancestry in the development of Hindu religious thought, in the Mahāyāna Buddhism as well as Śaivism. The basic idea that man is not necessarily bound by the moral law and can reach a state that takes him beyond its purview, so that he freely ceases to obey and to be bound by its precepts, permeates the Śākta cults of Nātha, Kaula, and Kāpālīka and the Mahāyāna cults of Vajrayāna and Kālachakrayāna.

The guiding tenet of this religious philosophy is *svecchācāra*, do as you please, and its psychological justification is grounded in the profound Hindu psycho-analytical insight, *yatra yatra mano yāti tatra parampadam*,²⁹ towards whatever direction the basic mentation tends, that indicates the path to liberation of the individual soul.

Highly immoral pranks of some gods and goddesses of Hindu pantheon and shocking behaviour of some rishis, highly evolved Hindu souls, has to be viewed thus so as to be tolerated and appreciated by normal puritan minds.

This Hindu antinomianism must further be distinguished from the Christian antinomianism, that is the doctrine that the Christians are emancipated by the Gospel from the obligation to keep the moral law as formulated in the Old Testament decalogue, faith, alone being necessary, faith in the Christ, the Holy Ghost and God. Emancipation through faith alone, in supersession of the moral law, has been accepted in Mahāyāna Buddhism as well as in strictly orthodox, *sunnah*, and certain amoral heterodox, *bi-shar'a*, cults of Islam.

But in Sikhism such a doctrine or line of thought has been utterly and completely abandoned and repudiated, and the religious life has been altogether and absolutely identified with the moral life :

The night, the seasons, the lunar day and the solar day, the air, the water, the fire and the deep spaces, all these envelop and ensconce the earth which is the *locus* of *dharma*, the Moral Law. Here, on this earth, dwell various and numerous forms of life and species of created beings. They are all, in all cases, made subject to the law

²⁹ यत्र यत्र मनो याति तत्र तत्र परपदम् ।

of Karma, i.e. the rule of moral and good conduct, by God who is true for ever and for ever more, and is the Judge of Truth. No body is acquitted honourably in His Court, except those of good and righteous conduct i.e. the *pañchas*; and the final liberation is, verily, the gift of His Grace. The mature and the immature are finally adjudged as such in the Court of God; and this truth every soul shall know for itself in the Beyond, when the final moment of truth arrives.³⁰

To recall, Sikhism does not permit sexual orgies, nor does it allow adultery. "Sexual orgies and wrath tell heavily upon one's health. They bring about dissolution of the human body just as borax causes dissolution of gold",³¹ saith Guru Nanak. These are, therefore, to be shunned. Again, he admonishes elsewhere : "Give up ye cherishing evil designs on another's wife and wealth. Give up ego, carnal passions, evil motives, talking ill of others, and all that is a store-house of sexuality and ire".³² Indeed, the Sikh scriptures are full of injunctions on the point. Likewise, emancipation through faith alone has never been the slogan of Sikhism. The founder of the faith has explicitly said that the Guru, the Pir, in fact, the Prophet would stand by his believer only if he were to abstain from eating caricature, which is synonym with all that stands for immoral and antisocial. He goes on

³⁰ ਰਾਤੀ ਰੁਤੀ ਬਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ॥ ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਤਾਲ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ ਧਰਮਭਾਲ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੀਅ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਕੇ ਰੰਗ॥ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਨੰਤ॥
ਕਰਮੀ ਕਰਮੀ ਹੋਇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥ ਸਚਾ ਆਪਿ ਸਚਾ ਦਰਬਾਰੁ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਸੋਹਨਿ ਪੰਚ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ॥ ਨਦਰੀ ਕਰਮਿ ਪਵੈ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ॥
ਕਚ ਪਕਾਈ ਚਿਥੈ ਪਾਇ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਗਇਆ ਜਾਏ ਜਾਇ॥

Japu, GGS, p. 7.

³¹ ਕਾਮੁ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਕਾਇਆ ਕਉ ਗਾਲੈ॥
ਜਿਉ ਕੰਚਨ ਸੋਹਗਾ ਢਾਲੈ॥

Ramkali, Omkar, GGS, p. 932.

³² ਪਰ ਦਾਰਾ ਪਰ ਧਨੁ ਪਰ ਲੋਭਾ ਹਉਮੈ ਬਿਖੈ ਬਿਕਾਰ॥
ਦੁਸਟ ਭਾਉ ਤਜਿ ਨਿੰਦ ਪਰਾਈ ਕਾਮੁ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਚੰਡਾਰ॥

Malhar, M 1, GGS, p. 1255-56.

to stress that mere talk would not secure for him the much desired emancipation so long as he does not practise truth.³³

This characteristic of Sikhism that sharply separates and distinguishes it from other religions, including Vaiṣṇavism, is grounded in the ancient spiritual insight of the Upanishad which declares that :

This Absolute Righteousness and the Moral Law, which directs the Universe and Society and the aggregate of the human body and its organs, is elixir of all beings, and all beings are its elixir.³⁴

In this background there are more cogent reasons for believing that the Sikh movement has drawn indirect inspiration from devotional upsurge of South India, represented by the fourth century *Trikkural* composed by Tiruvalluvar and, subsequently, by the Nayanaras of seventh century of the Christian era, whose sacred writings are compiled in the *Tirumurai*, rather than from the mainstream of Vaiṣṇavism. On closer scrutiny of the Bhakti movement of the Middle Ages and this earlier devotional upsurge in the south of India, and on closer comparison of the forms and contents of both with the contents and patterns of the Sikh movement, it appears more reasonable to suppose that the Sikh movement drew some of its inspiration from the earlier movement in the South for the following reasons : (a) the Sikh Gurus were at pains to repudiate the basic proposition of the Bhakti movement; (b) the compilation of the *Granth* by Guru Arjan has a close parallel with the compilation of the *Tirumurai* in so far as, like the *Vedas*, the *Tirumurai* and the *Granth* are in the nature of *samhitās*, compiled and edited, but not composed by a single man, while the literature of the Bhakti movement consists of books and not *samhitā*, such as the *Rāmāyana*; (c) the *Tirumurai* and the *Granth* claim the status of primary sacred writings, such as the *Vedas* themselves, while the literature of the Bhakti movement claims

੧੩ ਹਰੁ ਪਰਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਉਸੁ ਸੁਅਰ ਉਸੁ ਗਾਇ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਪੀਰੁ ਹਆ ਤਾ ਭਰੇ ਜਾ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ ਨ ਖਾਇ॥
ਗਲੀ ਭਿਸਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਈਐ ਛੁਟੈ ਸਚੁ ਕਮਾਇ॥

Majh, M 1, GGS, p. 141.

੧੪ ਅਯੰ ਧਰਮੋ ਜਰੋਥਾ ਮੂਰ੍ਯਾਨਾੰ ਸਥਾਨੰ ਧਰਮੰ ਰਯੰ ਗਰ੍ਯਾਨਿ ਮੂਰ੍ਯਾਨਿ ਸਥੁ ।

Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, II.5.11.

for itself merely the status of secondary sacred literature. The latter is pious literature relying on human argument and referring to scripture as authority, while the former is scripture or sacred writing, in its own right. An illustrative parallel is to be found in the *Pitakas* of the Pāli canon, the *Prajñāpāramitasūtras* of the Mahāyāna Sanskrit canon and the *Avadānas* of the Buddhist pious writings, such as *Mahāvastu*, and *Divyāvadāna*. (d) It is now becoming clear that in his extensive sojourn in the south, Guru Nānak was influenced and impressed by the southern school of Indian music and its temple architecture³⁵ and many *rāgas* and *sub-rāgas* employed by Guru Nānak and his successors in their revelatory poems, make their appearance for the first time in northern India, as does the temple architectural design of lake-cum-structure of the Golden Temple, Amritsar, and the Sikh Temple at Tarantāran. All facile speculations and assertions, therefore, about Sikhism being an off-shoot of the northern Bhakti movement and Guru Nānak being influenced by or indebted to Kabir or other saints of this category, are, on closer scrutiny, found without any worth or substance; and the conclusion is irresistible that Vaiṣṇavism and Sikhism are poles apart, in spirit and content, in temper and climate.

Similarly, Sikhism is completely outside the pale of Śaivism, which views god Shiva, as the Supreme God of the universe and primarily represented by His procreative symbol, the *liṅga*.

The repudiations made by Guru Gobind Singh on this point are unambiguous :

Some there are who pay divine homage to stone-icons by bowing before them in complete self-surrender, and others who dangle the sacred *liṅga* of the Shaivites around their necks as a symbol of total allegiance to god Shiva. These are false religious practices in which people indulge in ignorance of the true secrets of religion that pertains to God.³⁶ Great god Shiva, they deem as the God

³⁵ Benjamin Walker, *Hindu World*, pp. 329-30.

³⁶ ਕਾਹੂ ਲੈ ਪਾਹਨ ਪੂਜ ਧਰੇ ਸਿਰ ਕਾਹੂ ਲੈ ਲਿੰਗੁ ਗਰੇ ਲਟਕਾਇ॥

...
ਕੂਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਉਰਿਓ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਜਗੁ ਸ੍ਰੀਭਗਵਾਨ ਕੋ ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਪਾਇ॥

Akalustat, DG, pp. 14-15.

Almighty, compassionate and Eternal ! How little they do know of God and true religion.³⁷

The corpus of *Śivāgama*, or Shiva-code, or *Śaivasiddhānta* i.e. the True Principles of the Shaiva-religion, is closely allied to the Yoga and theistic forms of the Sāṅkhya metaphysics. It accepts the three ultimates, *pati*, the Lord, *paśu*, his flock or souls, and *pāśa*, the noose or matter. Thus, the Shiva is *paśupati*, and as such, on a terracota seal of Mohenjodaro, he is shown as surrounded by animals. In each *kalpa*, the world-period, Shiva evolves the Universe and souls, and in order that he may act in them, he evolves his *Śakti*, often called Umā.³⁸ This act of evolution is his world-famous Natarāja form, so beautifully reified in the Chola bronze, now preserved in the Albert and Victoria Museum, London.

The Shaivites are distinguishable from the Vaiṣṇavites in as much as the former do not accept the notions of the descent, *avatar*, of the deity, and also in so far as Shaivite cults are generally more ascetic and stern than those of the Vaiṣṇavites as they lay extreme emphasis on asceticism, mortification of flesh, *tapas*. The picturesque yogis and sadhus, so beloved of the American tourists' camera, those with upraised withered arms, those who take rest on beds of nails, the scatophilic anchorites who feed on carrion and excrements, those who frequent burning ghats and live-cemeteries, are almost all of them Shaivites. The Shaivites are strong believers in the unity and immanence of God; they abhor idolatry and are deeply conscious of personal sin, declaring : "even my good is evil."

This Shaivite cult or religious tradition of Hinduism has nothing substantially in common with Sikhism of the Gurus.

The fourth tradition, the Śākta tradition of Hinduism, which views the Godhead primarily in the form of Universal Mother Goddess and which is permeated by beliefs and practices of sexual mysticism, has been unequivocally disapproved of by the Sikh Gurus.

³⁷ ਮਹਾਂਦੇਵ ਕੋ ਕਹਤ ਸਦਾ ਸਿਵ॥ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਕਾ ਚੀਨਤ ਨਹਿ ਭਿਵ॥

Chritropakhyan, *Ibid.*, p. 1387.

³⁸ Sabhapati Mudaliyar (ed.), *Śaivasiddhanta*.

Utter waste and weariness is the life of the Śākta, for how can man be cleansed and made whole except through and by the wholesome Truth ?³⁹

Overpowered by carnal desires, submerged in passions of the flesh, bereft of faith in one true God, how can mortals realise Him ?⁴⁰

An integral part of this Śākta tradition is, the theory and the practices of the Tantra cult, as represented by the Mahāyāna Buddhism, fully developed in Bengal in the Middle Ages and by the Jogis in the Punjab. *Siddhgosti* of Guru Nanak is primarily concerned with the repudiation of this cult as then understood in northern India. Avalon describes the Tantra cult as "the development of the *Vaidika Karmakānda*, which under the name of the *Tantra Śāstra*, is the scripture of the *Kali Age*," in the Introduction to his *Principles of Tantra* (p. xxvii). These speculations derive from the ancient Hindu insight that there are analogies of structure and identity between man as microcosm and the macrocosm itself, asserted in the *Guru Granth* also.⁴¹

Tantra cult is a corollary of this insight, which postulates that man could use this common identity to modify the spiritual and material factors in the universe, if he proceeded from his own person and followed appropriate ritual. Tantrism consists of formulae, meditations and personification of passions, its major idea being that instead of opposing passions one should cultivate them so as to capture their powerful spiritual uplifting potency. It is this psychological presupposition which Sikhism denies and repudiates, as already stated.

Śaktism is the doctrine of the worship of Śakti, the Primal Energy, which is conceived as the Female Principle of the evolving universe while Tantrism is the sum total of modes of this worship and the two, therefore, constitute the two sides of the same medal.

³⁹ ਬਿਰਥੀ ਸਾਕਤ ਕੀ ਆਰਜਾ॥ ਸਾਚ ਬਿਨਾ ਕਹ ਹੋਵਤ ਸੁਚਾ॥

Gauri, Sukhmani, M 5, GGS, p. 269.

⁴⁰ ਕਾਮਨਾ ਅਧੀਨ ਸਦਾ ਦਾਮਨਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੀਨ ਦੇਕ ਭਾਵਨਾ ਬਿਹੀਨ ਕੈਸੇ ਪਾਵੈ ਜਗਦੀਸ ਕੋ॥

Akalustat, DG, p. 18.

⁴¹ ਜੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡੇ ਸੋਈ ਪਿੰਡੇ।

Dhanasari, Pīpa, GGS, p. 695.

Śaktism and Tantrism, in mutual integration, constitute a complete religion, such being the claim made on its behalf. Kullūkabhaṭṭa (c. 14th century) in the commentary on the *Manusmṛti* (II. I) asserts, that :

the divine revelation and self-evident authority is two-fold, the vedic and the tantric.⁴²

The dual characteristic of the Hindu gods, the contemplative and the active, the reigning and the conquering, the meditating and the militant, are nowhere so prominent as in Shiva and his consort, and when the Primal Energy is referred to in Śaktism, it is the Śakti of the god Shiva that is specifically intended. She is identified with the One Great God, Mahādeva, since she combines in her person, both the Universal Male and the Universal Female principles. She is the *Ardhanārīśvara*, the Half-Female Male God, so beautifully chiselled out of the living rock in the Elephanta Caves in the sea near the shores of Bombay (c. 7th century). She is the Magna Mater, the *Jagadambā* whom *Saundarya-lahari* of the prestigious Śaṅkara describes as the worthy Mother, the *Jaganmātr*

Whose slender waist, bending beneath the burden of the ripe fruit of her breasts, swells into jewelled hips, heavy with the promise of infinite maternities.

She has 1008 names, which is the number of creations and dissolutions of the universe before it is annulled into utter void, *mahāpralaya*, as a prelude to a new creation; and each of these names is indicative of Her many manifestations during the many cycles of creations : *Ambikā*, the Mother, *Annapūrṇā*, giver of nourishment; and, hence the *Annapūrṇā* restaurants of cheap food established under Government aid in many towns of present day India; *Bhadrakālī*, prosperity-maker; *Bhairavi*, awe-inspiring; *Bhavāni*, the mother of existence, the form in which the goddess was worshipped by the Thugs in India; *Bhaṭṭanāyikā*, the chieftainess of the devils; *Chandī*, with-angry-mien; *Chinnamastikā* having a severed head, the form in which she killed the terrible demon, Niśumbha, referred to in the *Chandīcharitra* of Guru Gobind Singh, and the form in which the

⁴² श्रुतिश्च द्विविधा वैदिकी तान्त्रिकी च ।

celebrated Sikh martyr, Bābā Dip Singh Shahīd (A.D. 1758) fought and struck terror in the ranks of the Pathan enemies of the Sikhs, near Amritsar; *Daśabhujā*, ten-armed; *Gauri*, the fair-complexioned; *Girijā*, the mountain-born; *Himāvati*, the daughter of the snowy Himalayas; *Jagaddhātṛ*, the world-sustainer; *Kālī*, the Time; *Kāmākṣī*, the wanton-eyed or the goddess of permissive sex, the form in which she is worshipped in Assam or might be worshipped in the near future by the world-community of the Flower-people, the Hippies; *Kāmeśvarī*, the goddess of love or the Hindu Venus; *Kanyākumārī*, the ever-virgin, Cape Comorin, the southern tip of India, is thus named; *Koṭari*, the nude, topless and bikiniless; *Lalitā*, charming; *Mahāmāyā*, the world-illusion; *Mahākālī*, the genocide-maker; *Mukta-keśī*, with unplaited hair, a style not unlike many modern sophisticated coiffeurs highly deemed and paid for by women everywhere; *Raktadantā*, the bloody-toothed; *Tripurasundarī*, the beauty-queen of all three worlds, heaven, earth and hell; *Satī* the paragon of virtue; *Vijayā*, the ever-victorious. In *Dasam Granth* (*Chandicharitra*, *devijūki ustat*, 223-46) these aspects of the Primal Energy are indicated in detail.

The active Female Principle, the procreative energy, the irresistible power of illicit love, the dynamism of sex, the flux of the phenomenal existence, the Time that evolves and the Time that dissolves, that power which creates, sustains and destroys, that which deludes and emancipates, that is the Śakti, and Guru Gobind Singh aptly describes this profound philosophical concept as :

In the beginning there was the incipient Time which was the Father of Creation, and from there emanated the infinitely powerful Light. Out of this All-Ground and Principle of Manifestation, grew Bhavani/Bhagauti, the matrix of Creation.⁴³

It is the Attribute and Power of God Almighty, the one and only God, which the activist, world-affirming Sikhs invoke in the beginning of their congregational prayer : *pritham bhagauti simar kai gur*

⁴³ ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਕਾਲ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਕੇ ਤਾਤਾ॥ ਤਾ ਤੇ ਭਯੋ ਤੇਜ ਬਿਖਾਤਾ॥
ਸੋਈ ਭਵਾਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਾਈ॥ ਜਿਨ ਸਿਗਰੀ ਯਹ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਉਪਾਈ॥

Chaubisavatar, DG, pp. 157-58.

Nānak lai dhiāi,⁴⁴ 'let us, to begin with, invoke the God of active manifestation, on whom Guru Nānak contemplated'.

Such is the philosophic texture of Śāktism and Tantrism, a combination of practices and theories having roots in the most ancient Hindu religious literature which had metamorphosed itself into a connected doctrine, by the 8th century A.D.

The most important of its principles and ideas are four : (1) that letters and syllables and their alphabetical forms, as determined in the Devanāgarī script and certain other diagrams, have a potent influence for the human organism and the universe. The opening text of the *Chhāndogyopaniṣad* and the closing section of the *Aitreyāranyaka* show that this doctrine is of ancient origin; (2) that human organism is a microcosm of the macrocosm of the Universe and that the human organism contains subtle channels, *nāṛis*, along which the nerve-power, *prāṇa*, moves along through subtle centres, *chakras*; (3) that in the lowest *chakra* resides the Primal Energy, *kuṇḍalini*, the coiled force, which creates the Universe and which can be made to ascend, through prescribed physical and mental techniques, upto the highest centre resulting in the emancipation of the individual soul; and (4) that there is a mysterious connection between the process of cosmic evolution and the sound, the metasonic vibration, especially the sound of *aum*.

These Tantras or Śāktāgamas are not mentioned by Chinese pilgrims who visited India during the 5th to 7th centuries; and *Amarakośa*, the 5th century Sanskrit dictionary, does not mention Tantra as a designation of religious texts. Bāṇabhaṭṭa (c. A.D. 630) gives numerous lists of sects, but though he mentions *Bhāgavatas* and *Pāśupatas*, he does not speak of Śāktas. Yet by the close of the 7th century, Buddhism had been closely infected with Tantrism; and the Śaṅkarācārya, in the 8th/9th century, had to contend with Tantrism.

This Tantrism and Śāktism with its metasonic and diagrammatic mystic formulae has not been accepted as a valid form of true religious discipline and way of life by Sikhism.

⁴⁴ ਧ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਮ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਸਿਮਰਕੈ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਧਿਆਇ॥

Var Sri Bhagauti ji ki, Patshahi 10, DG, p. 119.

The metasonic utterances and the mystical diagrams cannot release man from the clutches of finitude and Time.⁴⁵

Thus, Sikhism does not fall under any of these main currents of traditions of what goes under the name of Hinduism; and when a scholar or a careful student speaks of Hinduism, he essentially has these four currents of Hinduism in view.

It is in this sense that Sikhism is a non-Hindu religion, not a heterodox Hindu religion, as Buddhism or Jainism are deemed to be, but a religion in the most modern and most accepted sense of the world, and yet separate and distinct from Hinduism.⁴⁶

There are two other external tests that are available for us to determine whether Sikhism is a Hindu sect or an independent, distinct and completely new religion in its own right. These are the tests of genesis and species.

We have spoken of the rigid ethnicity of Hinduism and its essential geocentricity or geographical ground. We have considered a philosophical complex of four fundamental concepts that provide warp and woof to Hinduism. We have also considered the four mainstreams of Hinduism, which, properly speaking, are four orthodox Hindu religions and not just sects or cults of Hinduism.

Now, we shall consider how a proper sect or cult of Hinduism may validly arise.

Everybody, not superficially acquainted with Hinduism, has heard of *Brahmasūtrās*, the cryptic texts that constitute the foundation of Vedānta, which is the philosophic quintessence of Hinduism.

These *Brahmasūtras* are 555 in number, displaying an arithmetical symmetry such as is also evidenced in the number of human bones (222), verses of the *Qur'ān* (6666), repetition of the full Sikh metaphysical formulae, the *mūlamantra*, in the *Guru Granth* (33), and in its abbreviated forms therein (525).

⁴⁵ ਬਚੈਗੇ ਨ ਕਿਉਗੂੰ ਕਰੈ ਕਾਲ ਚੇਟੰ॥ ਲਿਖੰ ਜੰਤ੍ਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਪਤੰ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਕੇਟੰ॥

Bachitranātak, *DG*, p. 43.

⁴⁶ "Q. 1. Who is a Hindu? A. He who accepts the Vedas, the Śrūtis, the Purānas and the Tantras as the basis of religion and the rule of conduct, and believes in one Supreme Brahma, in Karma and in *Punarjanam* (reincarnation)".—R.B. Srichandra, *A Catechism of Hindu Dharma*, p. 1.

Is there something in what Aristotle tells us about Pythagoreans that 'they supposed the elements of number to be the elements of all things and the whole heaven to be a musical scale and of numbers'?

Brahmasūtrās mean clue-texts to Knowledge of God. *Sūtrā*, literally string, in literature means a 'clue' intended as memory-aid to long discussions held on any topic which the student had gone through with his teacher. Much thought was compressed into these *sūtrās* of ancient Hindu texts, in as few words as possible. Mādhava (A.D. 1197-1280) in his commentary on the *Brahmasūtrās* quotes definition of *sūtrā* from the *Padmapurāṇa*, which runs as follows :

People learned in *sūtrā* literature say that a *sūtrā* should be concise and unambiguous, give the essence of the arguments on the topic, but at the same time deal with all aspects of the question be non-repetitious and, otherwise, free from literary blemishes.⁴⁷

The authors of these ancient *sūtrās* are not founders of the systems of thought but merely propounders and systematizers of thought developed on the subject by generations of earlier thinkers.

Such *sūtrās* were subsequently developed and modified by later thinkers though none of them claimed any originality in it declaring that they were merely interpreting the *sūtras*. These interpretations gave rise to various genres of philosophical commentaries, such as, *vākya*, *vṛtti*, *kārikā*, and *bhāṣya*, each being more and more elaborate than the previous one.

The *Vedas*, as we have seen, are not human compositions, but supra-human in origin, *apauruṣeya*, and they have a two-fold, division, that pertaining to ritual, *karmakāṇḍa*, and that concerning knowledge, *jñānakāṇḍa*, this latter being the Vedānta.

Traces of opposition to the contents of the *Veda* is traceable in the very vedic texts, where this opposition is referred to as extreme form of a rationalism of the Chārvākas. From the Buddhist text, *Brahmajālasūtrā*, we learn that in the age preceding the Buddha, there were as many as sixty two different schools of philosophy in India and the Buddhist literature reveals names of a good number of teachers

⁴⁷ अल्पाक्षरमसंदिग्धं सारवद्विशतोमुखम् ।

अरतोभमनवद्यं यं सूत्रं सूत्रविदो विदुः ॥

venerated in India, two thousand years ago, such as, Pūrṇakaśyapa, Kātyāyana, Makkālī-gośāl, Nigaṇthanāthputra who represented anti-vedic Indian culture. In this manner, for centuries, philosophic thought developed in India which ultimately became so unwieldy that its systematization became a necessity. And this led to *sūtrā*-literature.

Brahmasūtrās are the crowning glory of the *sūtrā*-literature their authorship is ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa who attempted to systematize the thought or trends of thought contained in the Upanishads. From the *Brahmasūtrās* itself we find that there were other schools of Vedānta which had their own following and the names of Audulomi, Bādari, Jaimini, Kārṣaṇārjini, and Asāmarthya are specifically mentioned in this connection. Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtrās*, therefore, are not to be deemed as the only work in the Vedānta school, though it is, probably, the last and the best one.

All the sects of Hinduism in India now hold this work to be the great authority and every new sect originates from a fresh commentary on it.

No new sect can be founded in Hinduism except through a new commentary on the *Brahmasūtrās*, known to be as old as the Hindu rocks.

There existed in the time of Pāṇini (350 B.C.—250 B.C.?) *sūtrās* known as, *bhikṣusūtrās* which are identified by Vāchaspati (15th c.) in his *Chintāmaṇi*, with *Vedāntasūtrās*, the subject matter of which being Brahma, is pre-eminently meant for *sannyāsis* and thus might well be called *bhikṣusūtrās*. That the *Vedāntasūtrās* were known to exist before Buddha, can also be inferred from the *Bhagavadgītā*, the date of which, along with that of the *Mahābhārata*, of which the former is a part, can be fixed before the time of the Buddha. Both of them are pre-Buddhistic, because they contain no reference to Buddha and Buddhism, while quotations from both are found in the writings of Baudhāyana (400 B.C.). The language of *Bhagavadgītā* also belongs to a period before Pāṇini to whom the epic characters were known. Thus *Mahābhārata* and *Bhagavadgītā* are anterior to Buddha.

In the *Bhagavadgītā* there is a clear reference to the *Brahmasūtrās* (XIII.4), where the expression, *brahmasūtrapad yāḥ*, occurs. The full

text says :

This has been sung by the *rishis* in various ways and in different metres and definitely and logically by the *brahmasūtrās*.

Tilak, in his *Gītārahasya*, argues that the first half refers to teachings which are disconnected and unsystematic, which is the Upanishads, and the latter half to something definite and logical, which are *Brahmasūtrās*. Rāmānuja (A.D. 1017-1137?) and Mādhava (A.D. 1197-1280) the Hindu commentators on *Gītā* identify *Vedāntasūtrās* in the above mentioned couplet of the *Gītā*.

Brahmasūtrās of Bādarāyaṇa are so fundamental to orthodox and regular Hinduism that all the great *āchāryas*, the founders of Hindu sects, have written commentaries on them.

The oldest extant commentary is that of Śaṅkara (A.D. 788-838). A *vṛtti* by Upavarṣa is mentioned by Śaṅkara and Bhāskara, and a *vṛtti* by Baudhāyana is quoted by Rāmānuja in his *Śrībhāṣya*.

Śaṅkara was followed by a host of commentators, Yādava-prakāśa, Bhāskara, Vijnānbhikṣu, Rāmānuja, Nilakanṭha Śrīpati, Nimbārka, Mādhava, Vallabha and Baladeva.

There are some recent commentaries also.

All these commentaries, whether they have led to establishment of cults and communities of followers or not, maintain that their system is the one which Bādarāyaṇa truly propounded through his *sūtrās*. At present only five of them are regarded as having genuinely founded distinct Hindu cults, Śaṅkara, the exponent of *advaita*, Rāmānuja of *viśiṣṭādvaita*, Nimbārka of *bhedābheda*vāda, Mādhava of *dvaita*vāda and Vallabh of *śuddhā-dvaita*vāda.

These five Hindu cults, with their distinct systems of metaphysics, derive their authority from the same identical *Brahmasūtrās*.

How is it that the same fundamental text has given rise to distinct, mutually conflicting, systems of metaphysics and distinct independent Hindu cults?

There are more than one good reasons why it is so : (1) The brevity of *sūtrās* gives much scope to individual suppositions and, in the absence of universally accepted traditions, these personal suppositions hold the field in a given case. (2) Sometimes the same *sūtrā*, by

a mere shift of the stop, can yield to conflicting interpretations as, for instance, Mādhava in his *Paribhāṣya* argues that the famous aphorism in the *Chhândogya*, *sa ātmā tattvamasi*,⁴⁸ 'Thou art one with the world-soul', should be read as, *sa ātmā, atat tvam asi*, 'Thou art not the world-soul', so why be so conceited as to say that Thou art ? (3) While there is tradition regarding arrangement into chapters and sections, there is no such accepted tradition as regards division into *adhikaraṇa*, topics, and there is nothing to guide which *sūtrā* is the *pūrvapakṣa*, the *prima facie* proposition, and which the *siddhānta* or the author's conclusion. So every one is free to arrange the *sūtrās* into topics as his fancy dictates. (4) Bādarāyaṇa, quite often, is silent about his own position about a fundamental proposition, and is merely content to say: 'such is the view of so and so'. For instance, in *sūtrā*, *pratiṇā siddher—liṅgamāśmarathya*⁴⁹ (I.4.20), the assertion merely is : 'of the proof of the proposition, the indicatory mark *Āśmarathya*' which, when rendered into coherent language, would mean that 'the fact that the individual soul is taught as the object of realisation is an indicatory mark, *liṅgam*, which is the proof of the proposition, so *Āśmarathya* thinks.'

These main peculiar characteristics of *Brahmasūtrās* render them into such plastic texts that different distinct, and conflicting metaphysical systems can be evolved out of them through ingenious commentaries, so as to produce valid vedic authority and sanction for new Hindu cults and sects.

We have already referred to five *āchāryas* or commentators of *Brahmasūtrās*, who have founded living and valid Hindu sects. All these five founders of Hindu sects agree on certain points with each other where the *Brahmasūtrās* attack and repudiate non-vedic or anti-vedic schools and philosophies. There are three such main points : (1) that Brahma is the cause of this world which is not *sui generis*, (2) that knowledge of Brahma leads to final emancipation which is the *summum bonum* of man, and (3) that Brahma can be known only through the scriptures, *śruti*, and not through mere reasoning, *tarka*.

⁴⁸ स आत्मा तत्त्वमसि

⁴⁹ प्रतिज्ञा सिद्धे लिङ्ग माश्मरथ्यः ।

Chhândogyopanīṣad, VI.8.7.

But they differ among themselves with regard to (1) the nature of this Brahma, (2) its causality with respect to the world, and (3) the condition of the soul when it is emancipated and released.

According to Śāṅkara, the Absolute Reality, Brahma, is attributeless, immutable, pure intelligence. Personal God, *Īśvara*, is a product of *māya* and it represents the highest manifestation of the Brahma by the individualised soul. The phenomenal world is apparent transformation through *māya* of the attributeless, *nirguṇa* Brahma, but not in reality, that is, *vivarta*. The soul as individualised, *jīva*, though in reality all-pervading and identical with Brahma, regards itself as atomic, as an agent. They who know thus the God of attributes, *saguṇa* Brahma, attain final emancipation through a circuitous path, *devayāna*, the path of gods, and those who realise the Brahma without attributes, *nirguṇa*, go direct to the final Goal. There is no liberation except through Knowledge, *jñāna*.

To Rāmānuja and other *āchāryas*, the Brahma is not attributeless but essentially a Personal God, bearing infinite benign attributes. They hold that personality, as we finite human beings experience it, though limited, does not necessarily contradict infinity as attribute of God. They accept the world as real, that emanates from Brahma, but not through any illusory process of *māya*. Mādhava, however, accepts God only as the efficient cause and not the material cause of the universe. All of them regard *jīva* as atomic, an agent and 'a part of God.' The knower of Brahma goes to the Abode of the Brahma, *brahmaloka*, and does not return to this world of the mortals. They do not accept Śāṅkara's distinction between the lower and higher knowledge. According to them, loving faith and devotion, *bhakti*, is the means of liberation and not knowledge, *jñāna*.

To all of them, the post-Śāṅkara *āchāryas*, the Brahma, the soul and the universe are realities. Rāmānuja integrates all the three into one organic whole by saying that the other two constitute the Body of the Brahma. Nimbārka (A.D. 1130-1200 ?) integrates the three by his doctrine of Difference-in-non-difference, *bhedābheda*, i.e. the relation of the sentient and the insentient world with Brahma, is one of the difference-in-identity. It is this *bhedābheda* doctrine that has inspired

the *cliche* of the modern Hindu politician, 'unity-in-diversity' regarded as the universal solvent of all ills and problems of politics and society. It was the Nimandi sect of this Nimbārka that flourished as the dominant Hindu sect in the heart of Hindudom, *brajabhūmi* or Mathurā region, for over a hundred years in the 17th century and which produced considerable religious literature of high merit, but which sect and literature were almost wiped out by Aurangzīb. Mādhava, a thoroughgoing dualist regards all these three-God, soul and the world, as quite independent and eternal entities, though Brahma is the Lord of the other two. To Vallabha (A.D. 1479-1531) the world and the souls are Brahma itself and their relation to God is that of the parts to a whole.

All of them differ from Śaṅkara over the nature and status of the emancipated soul. They reject complete absorption and utter loss of self-identity of the liberated soul, as Śaṅkara thinks.

In the evolution of Indian philosophy three alternative concepts of liberation, *mukṭi*, have been formulated primarily : (1) *Nirvāṇa* (literally, extinguishment of a flame), or self-annulment, advocated by early Buddhists, Nyāya-vaiśeṣikas, and Prabhākara school of Pūrvamīmāṃsā ; (2) *Kaivalya*, detachment, isolated of the soul from the matter, subscribed to by Śāṅkhyayoga and Jain systems; (3) Utter integration with the Absolute Reality, which is the Vedantic concept.

The *āchāryas*, other than Śaṅkara, accept a concept of liberation, which is somewhat different from all these three concepts in so far as they postulate an eternal, abiding, atomic identity of the liberated soul, only its plenitude is transmuted in its new and restored relationship with God.

We have gone here into a more or less detailed dissertation on what *Brahmasūtrās* are, who are their chief commentators, what their commentaries, in fact say and how there has historically arisen, or can validly arise, no Hindu sect or religious school, *mazhab* in Islamic terminology, unless it derives its authority from a new claim as the only valid commentary on the *Brahmasūtrās*.

Such is not, demonstrably, the genesis of Sikhism; and, directly or indirectly, Sikhism has never claimed its validity as arising out of an interpretation of *Brahmasūtrās* or, indeed, from any Hindu scripture or text, whatsoever.

That Sikhism is not a Hindu sect should be clear to any body who understands what a Hindu sect is and how it arises. Only superficial observers or presumptuous non-Hindu scholars airily assert that Sikhism and the Sikhs are a Hindu sect.

In a recent book⁵⁰, its author convincingly argues out the characteristics that finally and absolutely distinguish the religions of the West and the religions of the East that have "their birth in India", and yet, with the typical self-assurance of a European scholar, fails to distinguish the religions that had "their birth in India", and Sikhism, which even though arising in India, essentially partakes of the characteristics that distinguish the religions of the West. This author points out that the "religions of the West" are (a) anti-idolatrous, (b) prophetic and (c) revelatory, while those of Indian origin are (a) iconographic, (b) introspective and (c) mystical.

By this test Sikhism, though born in India is "a religion of the West" in texture and temper, being non-idolatrous, prophetic and revelatory and thus, by implication, a non-Hindu religion.

It is no doubt, as a result of application of these two external tests, those of genesis and texture and temper—Sikhism being a religion that is not rooted in the *Brahmasūtrās* or Hindu sacred corpus and Sikhism being a non-idolatrous, prophetic and revelatory religion—that Śrī Rājagopālachārī in his, *Vaishnava Reformers of India*, with greater acerbity than academic poise, observes that "Sikhs are no better than un-circumcized Mussalmans".

There is no doubt that, when Guru Gobind Singh declared that the religion which he was finalising and the religion which the Gurus had revealed, was the *usar panth*, "the third religion", as distinct and different from Hinduism and Islam, Aryan and semitic religions, complete in itself and distinct from both of these, aiming at the final synthesis and convergence of both these religions and cultural streams into itself, it was in this sense that the above assertion was made.

⁵⁰ Zaehner, R.C., *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Living Faiths*, pp. 15-16.

Now, we come to the last of the four facets of Hinduism. Linked with the philosophic concept of *Dharma* are the peculiarly Hindu principles of the organisation of society, expressed in the institution of the four classes of society, the doctrine of the *Varṇāśramadharma*. It is clear that, by the end of the *Rgvedic* period, the four-fold division of society, consisting of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaiśyas and Sudras was regarded as fundamental, primaeval, and divinely ordained, and in the *Puruṣasūkta* of the *Rgveda*, the doctrine of the divine origin of this four-fold society from the body of the primaeval Man, *Puruṣa*, is clearly laid down.⁵¹ This doctrine of *Varṇāśramadharma* is fundamentally different from the state of stratification of classes which existed in many ancient Indo-European communities, and from the *Pistras* of the ancient Iran. Throughout the centuries, the concept of Hindu religion, Hindu philosophy, Hindu culture and Hindu civilization presupposes as valid the concept of *Varṇāśramadharma*, which is treated as almost axiomatic. Even at the time of the beginnings of the Christian era, which marks the highest peak of Hindu culture and philosophy, when the system of the *Śūnyatā* of Nāgārjuna, and the great synthesis of the *Bhagavadgītā* arose, the concept of *Varṇāśramadharma* remained tacitly accepted in the former and was explicitly reaffirmed in the latter. Subtlety, with which the author of the *Bhagavadgītā* synthesizes the materialistic Sāṅkhyayoga and the idealistic Upanishadic psychological doctrine of the Absolute and from this synthesis extracts and validates the desirability of activism, to this day, remains an epitome and marvel of human speculation, but even in the *Bhagavadgītā*, this great feat is eventually aimed at reaffirming the doctrine of *Varṇāśramadharma*. "Better one's own *dharma*, though destitute and worthless of merit, than the *dharma* of another. He who performs the duties indicated by his own born-nature incurs no sin."⁵² It is when this *Varṇāśramadharma*, this eternal four-fold division of birth, is threatened that god Vishnu, the Creator and

⁵¹ ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद् बाहू राजन्यः कृतः ।

ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत ॥

Rgveda, X. 90. 12

⁵² श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥

Bhagavadgītā, XVIII. 47.

Sustainer of the Universe, takes birth and assumes a mortal form, *sambhavāmi*. Unlike the god of Christianity, who is a victim of and is sacrificed to Evil so that the humanity may be saved, the Hindu god Vishnu descends as a counterweight to the forces of Evil during the course of every cyclic decline of the *Varṇāśrama-dharma*. There is, therefore, no Hinduism, no Hindu culture, no Hindu society, without a tacit acceptance and ever-renewed resurgence of this *Varṇāśrama-dharma* and the duties which it enjoins with regard to religious performances and in the secular, economic and political spheres, in the life of each member of the Hindu society, of which duties the spiritual obligations, the *dharma*, is merely a superstructure, as the Marxist would say. The *Varṇāśramadharmā* is so pivotal to Hinduism and Hindu way of life that in general estimation the two are deemed as identical. The Sikh Gurus completely and utterly repudiated, not only the supposed primaeval and divine origin of the institutes of the *Varṇāśramadharmā*, but also its ethical validity or secular utility. Guru Gobind Singh also spoke of his descent into this phenomenal world of mundane affairs from the highest attitudes of the Absolute for the avowed purpose, "to propagate *Dharma*, the right way of life, to exalt the virtuous and to destroy the evildoers, root and branch,"⁵³ but he spoke of *Dharma* not in its specific sense of *varṇāśrama* duties but in its generic sense of ethical life, and his descent from the high Absolute spheres is in no way connected with the doctrine of the cyclic incarnation of the Divinity, *sambhavāmi yuge yuge*, which doctrine has been expounded in the Appendix to the *Mahābhārata*, called, the *Harivamśa*. It was this *Varṇāśramadharmā* that was repudiated with such vehemence by Guru Gobind Singh on the Baisākhi of March 30, 1699.

In this respect then, also, the Sikhs and the Sikh way of life do not fall under the usual categories of the Hindu religion, and it is clear that what Guru Gobind Singh aimed at, was a complete and basic revolution in the social ideals and social organization of Hindus with a view to making it possible for Hindus to become equal and active members of an equalitarian and global World-Fraternity, and the model for such

⁵³ ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਵਨ ਸੰਤ ਉਥਾਰਨ॥ ਦੁਸਟ ਸਭਨ ਕੇ ਮੂਲ ਉਧਾਰਨ॥

Bachitrnāṭak, DG, pp. 57-58.

Fraternity was to be the Order of the Khalsa, which Guru Gobind Singh initiated on this Baisākhi day.

Bhāi Sukhā Singh (d. c. A.D. 1799) was a Bengali Sikh who spent the last decade of his life at *Takht* Kesgarh Sāhib the holy spot where Guru Gobind Singh inaugurated the Order of the Khalsa in A.D. 1699. There, during these turbulent days of the country's history, when the Sikhs were gradually securing a dominant position in the north of India, he completed his heart-warming story of the Guru, the *Gurbilās*, in the year 1797, when Rañjit Singh had still to occupy Lahore and declare himself as the Maharaja of the Punjab in his capacity as the Caretaker of *Sirkār-i-Khālsā*, the Sikh Commonwealth. In his *Gurbilās*, Bhāi Sukhā Singh explains :

It is basic to know that
This divine royal sword-emblem uniform that,
In His infinite compassion for mankind, the Guru
confers on the Elect,
Is the final and unique World religion,
To be the guide and model for the future World-society.⁵⁴

Such a global Fraternity, in which the genius of the Hindu race is to play a prominent part, but which is to be founded on the basis of all-round equality, is no doubt, completely alien to racist and geocentric beliefs such as that those born outside the Hindu society are in some way doomed to an inferior spiritual status.

Apart from repudiating certain basic principles and institutes that constitute Hinduism, and holding forth others, what positive specific means did Guru Gobind Singh intend, should be applied for the creation and establishment of the global Fraternity consisting of equal members and grounded in a universal culture, which represents a living and creative synthesis of all the great cultures of the world, and which must ennoble and sustain human Society in different climes and countries.

It seems that there were two means which, the Guru intended, should be applied as a ferment and lever for the upliftment of human

⁵⁴ ਇਹ ਖਤਰਾਕੇਤੂ ਬੁਰਕਾ ਸੁਜਾਨ। ਜੋ ਦਯੋ ਚਰਤ ਕਰੁਣਾ ਨਿਧਾਨ।

ਇਹ ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤ ਏਕੈ ਸੁਪੰਥ। ਗੁਰ ਰਚਨੇ ਜਗਤ ਕੋ ਦੈਨ ਸੰਥ।

Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas Padshahu* 10, p. 198.

mind, so that they may become a suitable vehicles for the creation and sustenance of this Fraternity. One was his passionate conviction that the principles of Politics which govern relations between the rulers and the citizens, and relations between the states and states, should be so revolutionized as to bring them in complete accord with the principles of ethics. His two letters of admonition, called *Fatehnāmeḥ* and *Zafarnāmeḥ*, which he despatched to emperor Aurangzib (1658-1707) after his eviction from the fortress of Anandpur, contain some of the clearest expositions of his ideas on this point.

You are accustomed to conduct your statecraft through deceit and diplomacy. I approve of naught but that it accords with the principles of Ethics and the dictates of conscience⁵⁵—

says he in his first letter of admonition, called *Fatehnāmeḥ*.

He alone is a cultured man, he alone worthy of the name of a human being whose 'yea' is 'yea' and 'nay' is 'nay'. He who says one thing and means and intends another, is less than man⁵⁶

⁵⁵ نائزکتازی بہ مکروریا . مراچارہ سازی بہ مدق و مفا

Fatehnāmeḥ (December 1705)

⁵⁶ ہمون مرد باید شود سخن ور نہ شکبہ دگر درد ہائے دگر

Zafarnāmeḥ

"In an imperial receipt on the proposal of Khwajah Sarbuland Khan, the Chief paymaster, recommending appointment of a noble as the Governor of Kabul, Aurangzib observed (*circa* 1675): 'This noble has extreme severity and obstinate adhesion to one policy only, in as much as he was never known subterfuge. Besides, he is very honest and simple-minded; as he cannot at all understand fraud and stratagem. One cannot rule without practising deception. The clear text of the Holy Traditions [of Muhammad] is, 'War is stratagem'...In the opinion of the common herd, cunning and deception are greatly scorned. As God Himself in His Holy Word (the *Qur'an*) has ascribed cunning to His own holy Self, saying *God is the best of plotters*, it is contrary to the *Qur'an* to consider stratagem as blameable. Besides, in governing Kabul this quality is most beneficial and excellent."—Quoted by Sarkar Jadūnāth in *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 86.

The holy *Qur'an* of which Aurangzib was a most devoted scholar, appears not only to permit convenient oaths but seems to encourage them by prescribing light expiations also, such as "feeding of ten pōor persons" or just "fasting for three days" (5 : 90). The *Qur'an* would seem to lay down that a false oath is not

(To continue)

he declares in the second letter of admonition christened *Zafanāmeḥ*.

Since the days of Plato and Aristotle in the European thought culminating in the brilliant exposition of statecraft by Machiavelli, it has been assumed that the principles which govern the conduct of the kings and interstate relations, are different from those which govern individual conduct. The *dandaniti* and the *rājaniti*, as preached and practised in India from times immemorial and brilliantly explained in the two thousand years old Kautilya's *Arthasāstra*, and *Panchatantra* of Viṣṇu Śarmā, accept this dichotomy as valid and necessary; and not, till after the second World War, has this seriously been doubted and questioned, though about one hundred and sixty years after the ordination of the Order of the Khalsa, Marx and Engels, in their *Documents of the International Workingmen's Association*, exhorted the workers of the world to wage "the struggle for simple laws of ethics and justice which ought to govern the relations of private individuals as the paramount rules of the intercourse between nations." The principle of open diplomacy was never accepted as a working hypothesis for interstate relations, and inspite of lip-service to the ideals of democracy, except in certain countries where civic education and political awareness of the citizen is of a high order, this concept has never been accepted as a working principle between the rulers and the ruled. It was a passionate conviction of Guru Gobind Singh that, unless this principle is accepted and implemented in both the spheres, that is, in the sphere of relations between the rulers and the ruled, and in the sphere of international relations, the emergence of a universe culture, as the basis for a global fraternity, is not possible.

(Continued)

only permissible and desirable but also obligatory, if the end justifies the means (60 : 3) :

فَقَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحْلَةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ

"Allah has indeed allowed to you the dissolution
of your oaths and Allah is your friend."

The high Hindu ethical norm, *prāṇ jāe par vachan na jāi*, death rather than breach of faith, is, apparently, not approved strictly by semitic rules of high conduct, which do not seem to accept the Aryan, Zoroastrian precept, the axiom of the *Bhagavadgītā* and Patanjali's *Yogasūtra* that in a well-knit man, the intention, the declaration and the deed must harmonize. cf. the Sikh insight that in an authentic man the mind, the word and the act must agree with one another.

When, in 1705, Guru Gobind Singh mildly rebuked Aurangzib, in the *Fatehnāmeḥ*, saying

Your Imperial Majesty's royal title, The *Ornament of the Throne*, does not appear to be literally related to your Majesty's conscience and deeds, for, as we ordinary human beings understand it, deceit and kingly office are not identical concepts,⁵⁷

it appeared to those mature and experienced in the age-old sciences of the statecraft that the Guru was more naive than wise in matters that concern kings and their minions.

That the human mind has recently awakened to the urgency of the truth of Guru Gobind Singh's words, is no mean tribute to his prescience and genius.

The other lever, which is the fourth and the basically operative idea, that we see inherent in this Baisākhī, was the creation of a *saṅgha* or, as we would say in modern political parlance, a party for the avowed purpose of facilitating the emergence of the global Fraternity. Such a party and such a *saṅgha*, in the very nature of things, must be a group of persons dedicated to the cause which includes political activity, and it is in this context that the litany, which is repeated in every Sikh congregation, throughout the world, every morning and evening, to the effect that—

The Khalsa shall become the supreme
Decision-maker in human affairs.
And all effective opposition shall cease.
Those in the opposition camp shall eventually
come round to the right way after many frustrations,
And they shall realize that stability
and progress can only thus be assured.⁵⁸

is to be understood and appreciated. The Order of the Khalsa, as divorced from political activity and not dedicated to the achievement

⁵⁷ نہ زبید تروانام اورنگ زیب ز اورنگ زیبای نیاید فریب

Fatehnāmeḥ (December, 1705)

⁵⁸ ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਆਕੀ ਰਹਿ ਨ ਕੋਇ,
ਖੁਰ ਹੋਇ ਸਭ ਮਿਲੈਗੇ ਬਚਿ ਸਰਨ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ।

Karṇāmeḥ; and Rahitnāmeḥ Bhai Nandlal (c. 1707)

of political ends, aiming at eventual establishment of a universal equalitarian global Fraternity, has no intelligible connotation.

Bhāi Rattan Singh Bhaṅgū, the author of the important source-book of Sikh history, *Prāchin Panth Prakāś* (A.D. 1841), has made many significant observations on this aspect of the basic characteristics of the Order of the Khalsa :

The Khalsa is never a satellite to
another power.
They are either fully sovereign or
in a state of war and rebellion.⁵⁹
A subservient coexistence they never accept.
To be fully sovereign and autonomous is
their first and last demand.⁶⁰

For, the Guru recognized the validity and force of the Marxist stand two centuries earlier than the Marxists formulated it; namely that no amount of education or religious refinement is enough, as had been tacitly presumed throughout the ages of Indian history, unless the refined and emancipated man, the man who combines in himself wisdom and power, *jnāna* and *śakti*, both, in equal degrees, has control of the commercial and industrial machine, which is the State today, and control of the organized military power, which was the State always. The Guru's statements on this point are startlingly clear and uncompromising.

The Exalter of the Poor, the Guru, then spoke thus :

The political power and the State rest on armaments,
And without political sovereignty, the good
way of life cannot securely prevail in society.⁶¹

The Guru well realised that there is, in human nature, a pathological instinctive urge to crush the weak and the weakling, and a cultured

⁵⁹ ਅਵਰੁ ਕਿਸੂ ਕੀ ਕਾਟ ਨ ਪਰਿਹੈ, ਰਾਜ ਕਰੈ ਇਕੈ ਲਰਿ ਮਰਿਹੈ।

Prāchin Panth Prakāśh (Oral recension)

⁶⁰ ਕਾਟ ਨ ਕਾਹੂੰ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਰਾਖਤ, ਸ਼ਹਿਨਸ਼ਾਹ ਖੁਦ ਹੀ ਕੋ ਭਾਖਤ।

Prāchin Panth Prakāśh (Oral recension)

⁶¹ ਤਬ ਇਮ ਭਨਿਓ ਗਰੀਬਨਿਵਾਜ, ਸਸਤ੍ਰਨ ਕੇ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੈ ਰਾਜ,

ਬਿਨਾ ਰਾਜ ਨਹਿ ਧਰਮ ਚਲੈ ਹੈ। . . .

Gurpratāp Sūrya Granth, ain 1, *ansū* 36.

(Anandpur Sodhi's MS. with Sodhi Kartar Singh, New Delhi)

man of self-dignity, therefore, must equip himself against this persistent danger :

A man not free to bear arms in self-defence, and
One unable to proclaim his free sovereign status
with unshorn hair,
Is like a miserable sheep,
Inviting all and sundry to catch it by the ears and
lead it to the nearest slaughter-house.⁶²

A sovereign man, the Khalsa, fit to provide true leadership and meaningful service to society, must be a man of deep religious faith and humility and must be in possession of the power of arms to maintain his own integrity and to function truly in relation to society:

All the virtues of heart and the
excellences of mind :
These are the natural qualities of the Khalsa.
This is to be a new and unique type of man,
Who bears arms and constantly lives in
the presence of God;
Who strives and fights against evil
with his gaze rivetted to the stars.
Such is the goal to achieve which
the Khalsa has been ordained.
And lo, it is a well-armed and
well-integrated Man.⁶³

Under the impact of World Wars, revolutions and dictatorships, we are witnessing a revival of interest in heroes and hero-worship. At the dawn of the nineteenth century, Thomas Carlyle and Friedrich Nietzsche had spoken in defence of aristocracy, of establishing the rule of the elite. Spangler and D.H. Lawrence were unequivocal supporters of the idea that the powers of governing the common

⁶² ਬਿਨਾ ਸਸਤ੍ਰ ਕੇਸ਼ਮ ਨਰੁ ਭੇਟ ਜਾਨੇ, ਕਿਧੋ ਕਾਨ ਤੇ ਕੇ ਪਕੜ ਲੇ ਸਿਧਾਨੇ।

Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, XXIII. 15,21.

(MS. Panjab University, Chandigarh)

⁶³ ਸੁਖ ਬੁਧਿ ਸਹਿਤ ਭਲੇ ਗੁਣ ਸਾਰੇ। ਨਰ ਉਰ ਤੇ ਕਲਿਜੁਗ ਨਿਰਵਾਰੇ।

ਧਰਹਿ ਸਸਤ੍ਰ ਸਿਮਰਹਿ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ। ਧਰਮ ਧਰਹਿ ਪਹੁੰਚਹਿ ਸੁਰਧਾਮੁ॥੨੯॥

ਇਮ ਕਾਰਣ ਤੇ ਪੰਥ ਉਪਾਯੇ। ਦੇ ਆਯੁਧ ਰਸ ਬੀਰ ਬਧਾਯੇ॥ . . . ੩੦॥

Gurpratāpsūrya Granth, ain 1, ansu 36.

multitude should rest in the hands of the trained few. Such ideas, backed by the dialectical philosophy of Hegel, so raised the State to the status of the Absolute, an entity over and above the multitude, that it resulted in the modern Fascist and Nazi systems of government, in which must be included all systems of government based on the principles of party dictatorship, whether in theory or in practice, or both. It has sometimes been thought (Nietzsche was one such)⁶⁴ that our own *Mānavadharmaśāstra*, by ordaining the military caste of Kshatriyas had lent support to the Fascist idea and the doctrine of party-dictatorship, but less superficial consideration makes it clear that the basic impulses of the Institutes of Manu are antagonistic to the fascist idea, in so far as they create a military caste for the specific and statutory purpose of defending the weak against the powerful, for upholding the right against wrong, and for punishing those who practise tyranny and are unjust. It is this impulse embedded in the *Mānavadharmaśāstra*, which has been taken up and carried forth by Guru Gobind Singh in his concept of the Order of the Khalsa. As Thomas Jefferson wrote to Sir William James in 1813 :⁶⁵

for, I agree, that there is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talent. The natural aristocracy, I consider as the most precious gift of Nature for the instruction, trusts, and the Government of the Society,

so did Guru Gobind Singh believe that such an aristocracy, dedicated and consciously trained, but not by right of birth, an aristocracy which is grounded in virtue, in talent and in the self-imposed code of service and sacrifice, aristocracy of such men, should group themselves into the Order of the Khalsa, for the purposes of, "the instruction, the trusts and the Government of the Society."⁶⁶ William James had said, "Our democratic problem is statable in ultra-simple terms : who are the kind of men from whom our majority shall take their cue?" Carlyle said,

⁶⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Werke*, I. Edition, XIX, p. 372.

⁶⁵ D.H., Lawrence, *A Personal Record*, "Introduction", p. xix.

⁶⁶ (1) ਇਨ ਤੇ ਗਹਿ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਉਪਜਾਊ, ਕਥਾ ਕਰਨ ਕੀ ਗੀਤ ਸਿਖਾਊ॥

(2) ਮੈ ਇਨ ਕੋ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਣਾਊ, ਰਾਜ ਕਰਨ ਕੀ ਗੀਤ ਸਿਖਾਊ।

(3) ਮੈ ਇਨ ਕੋ ਦੋ ਹੁੰ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ, ਯਾਦ ਕਰੈ ਹਮਰੀ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ।

Prachin Panth Prakash (Oral recension)

"All that democracy ever meant lies here, the attainment of aristocracy and the Government of the best."⁶⁷ One may not entirely agree with Carlyle that this is all that democracy ever meant and this certainly was not what Guru Gobind Singh advocated, but Guru Gobind Singh clearly seemed to believe that aristocracy is one of the goals of democracy. For, what is more basic to democracy, than 'careers open to talent', a doctrine which so clearly presumes that talent is of supreme value? The Guru believed that democracy can justify itself only by including aristocracy as its goal, and because democracy alone can guarantee freest scope to talent, was, it would seem, the Guru's reason for having faith in it.

Oswald Spangler tells us (*Man and Technics*, 1932, p. 67), that aristocracy and talent cannot be wished or argued away :

There is a natural distinction of grade between men fit to command and men born to service, between the leaders and led of life. The existence of the distinction is a plain fact and in healthy periods and by healthy peoples it is admitted (even if unwillingly) by every one. In the centuries of decadence the majority force themselves to deny or ignore it, but the very insistence on the formula that 'all men are equal' shows that there is something here that has to be explained away.

Such an aristocracy it was which Guru Gobind Singh founded as the Order the Khalsa in 1699.

We have already said something new about the four ideas which, in our opinion, are manifest from the Baisākhi of March 30, 1699. This is the last and the fifth idea.

At the Baisākhi, the sun reaches the highest point of its orbit, called, *uchcha* in the Hindu system, and *aux* in the Medieval European system of astronomy. In the terms of the lunar Mansions of Western hemisphere, the Baisākhi is equivalent to Alpha, Beta and Gama of the Librae Zodiac. This is the final point of the rotation of earth, when the vegetation fully wakes up out of its slumber and somnambulance period, and ripens into its fruition. This is the end of experimentation, the spring and the growth, and at this point the growth matures into

⁶⁷ W. Allingham, *Some Useful Diaries*, "Introduction".

ripeness and abundance. Earlier, in Indian history, under similar planetary constellations, Gautama, the Buddha, had received Enlightenment and had heralded the dawn of a new society and a new world for "the good and benefit of all living things, mortal and immortal."⁶⁸ Guru Gobind Singh chose Baisākhi as the day for founding the Order of the Khalsa deliberately, with some such significance in his mind, so as to usher in the dawn of a new and regenerated society,⁶⁹ which was to arise in accordance with the Phoenix principle, the principle of Resurrection. The ceremony of the demand of human heads in the cause of *Dharma*, and the subsequent presentation of the newly born Five Beloved Ones to the public assembly, can mean only some such dynamic and awesome idea, and nothing else. It was this idea to which he gave expression by demanding the heads of living persons, and then by taking them into the tent of inner sanctuary where each individual must meet his God—in—death before he is qualified to live and to lead and serve the world. Such are the Five Beloved Ones, who had thus met their Death by submerging their little egos into the Universal Spirit, and who received the Baptism of the Steel and thus were qualified to rule and govern through service. It is in this background that Guru Gobind Singh identifies God with Death and gives Him the epithet of All-Steel.⁷⁰ That this was in essence the idea is not in doubt when we read certain poetical compositions of contemporary poets, such as Bhāi Gurdās [Singh], who received the immediate impact of the idea and of the living personality of Guru

⁶⁸ बहुजनहिताय, बहुजनसुखाय, लोकानुकम्पायै,

हिताय सुखाय देवमानुषाणाम् ।

⁶⁹ The idea of individual regeneration through prescribed ceremonies, embodying the doctrine of the *dvija*, the twice-born, is an ancient Indian idea. In the pre-Christian era, it is found in the Pali canon, *Majjhimanikaya*, in *sutra* 86, where the converted brigand, Angulimāla, the prototype of the Sikh Bhāi Bidhi Chand, speaks of his regenerate life as, *yato aham āriyāya jātaya jāto* (यतोऽहं आरियाय जातीय जातो) 'since I was born by this noble birth'.

In *Mānavadharmashastra* (II. 146), the same idea is again succinctly put and it is familiar to all caste Hindus and also Christians. The bold originality of Guru Gobind Singh consists in amplifying this idea, so as to make it applicable to the human society, as a whole, to the nations, collectively.

⁷⁰ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੀ ਰਛਾ ਹਮ ਨੈ॥ ਸਰਬ ਲੋਹ ਦੀ ਰਛਿਆ ਹਮ ਨੈ॥

Akalustat, DG, p. 11.

Gobind Singh on this occasion. The well-known odes of Bhāi Gurdās [Singh],⁷¹ are strongly reminiscent of the climate of the concluding stanzas of a poem by Percy Bysshe Shelley, composed almost a century and a quarter later, welcoming the dawn of a New Age.⁷²

The Baisākhī has yet another aspect that must have been taken note of by Guru Gobind Singh.

In a room on the semicircle of the National Museum at New Delhi, there stand two life-size sculptures of the twin sacred rivers of India, Gaṅgā and Jamunā, in the fourth-century Gupta sculptural style. Two graceful, benign female-divinities in *tribhaṅga*, 'thrice-bent', bodily postures or *āṅgika*, the goddess Gaṅgā, has her feet planted on a crocodile, *makara*, her traditional *vāhana*, mount, and she carries the 'vase of plenty' on the palm of her right hand. She is represented as a personification of health, abundance, dignity and prowess. A jewel necklace descends on her rotund, convexly protuberant breasts that reproduce the sphericity of the 'vase of plenty', *kalaśa*, that she carries. A rich diadem adorns her forehead and golden chains of her girdle and loin-cloth hanging down, designate her affluence-bestowing powers.

Gaṅgā or the Ganges, as the Europeans corrupt and call it, is the sacred-most Hindu river which is known as the Mother who 'bestows prosperity', *sukhadā*, and 'secures salvation', *mokṣadā*.

⁷¹ ਗੁਰੂਬਰ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਸੋ ਉਪਜਿਓ ਬਿਗਿਆਨਾ।

ਤਬ ਸਹਿਜੇ ਰਚਿਓ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਾਬਤ ਮਰਦਾਨਾ।

ਇਉਂ ਉਠੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਭਕਾਰਕੈ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਡਰਪਾਨਾ।

... ..

ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਖਟਸਾਸਤ੍ਰਾ ਫੁਨ ਮਿਟੀ ਕੁਰਾਨਾ।

... ..

ਇਉਂ ਤੀਸਰ ਪੰਥੁ ਰਚਾਇਅਨ ਵਡ ਸੂਰ ਗਹੇਲਾ।

ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪੇ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ॥

BG II, Var 41.16; p. 667.

⁷² Vide Percy Bysshe, Shelley, the poem "Hellas its last Chorus" composed at Pissa, Italy, November 1, 1821 :

The world's great age begins anew,

The golden years return.

The earth doeth like a snake renew,

Her winter weeds outworn.

Heaven smiles and faiths and empires gleam,

Like wreck of a dissolving dream.

In the *Brahmavaivartapurāṇa* (*Kṛṣṇajanma Khaṇḍa*, 34), the great god, Shiva, himself sings a praise-hymn to Gaṅgā :

She is the source of redemption. . . . Heaps of sin accumulated by a sinner during millions of births are destroyed by the mere contact of a wind charged with her vapour. . . . As fire consumes fuel, so this stream consumes the sins of the wicked. Sages mount the staired terrace of the Gaṅgā; on it they transcend the high heaven of even Brahmā. . . . Sinners who expire near the waters of the Gaṅgā are released from all their sins . . . they never die, not even on the Day of total Dissolution, *mahāpralaya*. And, if the dead body of a person, somehow, falls into the waters of the Gaṅgā, that person abides with Vishnu for as many years as there are pores in the skin of his body. If a man, at an auspicious hour of time, takes a dip in the holy river, he dwells cheerfully in Vishnu's heavenly world, *Vaikuṇṭha*, for the number of years that equal the number of footsteps taken by him in life.

This Gaṅgā, which, originally, flowing from the toe of the anthropomorphic personification of the divine Life-Substance of the Cosmos god Vishnu himself, was brought down to the earth, through severe austerities and penances, by Bhāgiratha, a solar king of pre-history days and, hence, Bhāgirathī is one of the many names of the Gaṅgā. The austerities consisted of standing in the nude with up-raised arms, *ūrdhva bāhu*, under a fierce blazing Indian sun with four fierce blazing fires burning on all the four sides of the ascetic—such is the *pañchāgnitapas*, which Bhāgiratha unflinchingly performed for a thousand years before he succeeded in persuading the divine river to agree to descend on to the mortal domain of earth for the good of the earth and of those whom the earth bears, and for the salvation of mankind.

An extensive work of relief-sculpture at Mamallapuram on the seashore near Madras in Tamil Nadu, vividly depicts the descent of this sacred river from heavens on to the earth, in a rock-cut tableau, measuring twenty-seven metres in length by nine in height. The myth of the Descent of the Gaṅgā, *Gaṅgāvataraṇa*, is recounted in the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki (I.38-44), and the *Mahābhārata* (*Vanaparva*, 108-109) and again, in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (IX.9).

In tangible form she flows at the doorstep of every Hindu, and in her divine essence, she nourishes and sustains Hindu soul here and redeems it hereafter.

At Haridwar it descends to the plains from its Himalayan cradle and at Allahabad, for which the original Hindu name is Prayag, it meets the Jamunā, and at the island Sāgara, it enters the nether regions of subtle hell-worlds. Thus it derives, as one of its names, *tripathagā*, 'wanderer-in-three worlds', and *trisrotāh*, 'triple-flowing'.

In the Sikh scripture, *Guru Granth*, the great benefits it bestows on earth are acknowledged by referring to it as 'a great benefactor that puts to shame those who give little but take much pride in what they give.'⁷³ The earthly benign aspect of Gaṅgā is handsomely acknowledged in Sikh theology, unlike the unfavourable reactions that Pakhtūn poet-patriot, *Khushahāl Khān Khaṭṭak* (d. 1689) recorded when he was transported from the eastern environs of Afghanistan by emperor Aurangzib to Agra as a political prisoner. He opens one of his Pashtu poems with the acerbic couplet :

Gaṅgā, Jamunā, how I hate you !
Sluggish rivers of the plains.

In his *Gurpratāp Sūryodaya* (II. ii, 36.22), the poet compares 'the story of the advent of the Gurus for the guidance of mankind' to 'the descent of holy Gaṅgā on to the earth.'⁷⁴

This Gaṅgā which gushes forth from the naval of the Hindu world, siphoning its life-giving stimulating sap to the Hindu psyche, penetrating to the deepest layers of the Hindu racial subconscious mind, descended on to this world of mortals on the Baisākhi day of a certain year, and this great mythological event of the Hindu world is today, from time immemorial, celebrated as *gaṅgādaśaharā*.

This evocative potency of the Baisākhi in relation to the Hindu mind was almost certainly present in his mind, when Guru Gobind Singh inaugurated the Order of the Khalsa on this significant day.

⁷³ ਆਖਿ ਨ ਦੇਹਿ ਦੁਰੁ ਭਰਿ ਪਾਨੀ॥ ਤਿਹ ਨਿੰਦਹਿ ਜਿਹ ਗੰਗਾ ਆਨੀ॥

Gauri Kabir, *GGS*, p. 332.

⁷⁴ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਗਾਥਾ ਸੁਭ ਗੰਗਾ।

Such is the true significance and the real meaning of the Baisākhī of March 30, 1699, which Guru Gobind Singh celebrated in the submontane town of Anandpur Sāhib, at the foot of the Śivālak hills of the Himalayas, and that is why he shouted *wāhigurū ji kā khālsā*, *wāhigurū ji kī fateh*⁷⁵, the Order of the Khalsa is of God and His is the final victory.

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هَوَالِغَالِب

'God is dominant' (*wahiguru ji kī fateh*) is a legend, this writer saw repetitively inscribed in graceful Arabic calligraphy on the porticos of the inner Lions' Court of the Spanish Moorish palace of Alhambra, at Cordoba, in the year 1932. Whether it is still there after this building was subjected to bombing during the Spanish Civil War in 1938, is not known to him.

CHAPTER II

HOW A 'SIKH' IS KNIGHTED A 'SINGH'

The following rules and regulations have received the formal approval of the premier statutory body of the Sikhs for managing the historic Sikh shrines in the Punjab, and they also have had the general approval of the theologians, head priests of Sikh Seats of Authority called the *takhts*, the thrones, and Sikh congregations in various parts of India, and other parts of the world, such as Malaya, Canada, Burma, U.S.A. and Africa¹. *Amrit* is administered to a Sikh, when he is knighted a Singh, enrolled as a member of the Khalsa, in accordance with the procedure laid down in these rules, which substantially represent the procedure formulated and adopted by Guru Gobind Singh on March 30, 1699, when he enrolled the first Five Beloved Ones, as the Khalsa :

1. For administering *Amrit*, a specially enclosed separate place, which is not a public thoroughfare or otherwise public, should be reserved for the occasion.

2. The *Guru Granth* should be formally enthroned and opened there with due ceremony and wrapped in ceremonial robes. There should be present, at least, six adult Singhs as officiants, and five of them must be certified as being not guilty of any un-expitiated breach of the Sikh discipline and formularies. The sixth one should sit on the throne in attendance of the *Guru Granth*, and the other five should cooperate in preparation and administration of *Amrit*. They all should have had a fuel bath, including the washing of headhair, and should be dressed in clean and proper clothes. These Singhs may be of any sex, male or female.

1 *Sikh Rahit Maryada* (Punjabi), pp. 1-8.

3. None of the five, who have to prepare and administer *Amrit*, should be physically defective, such as, one-eyed, lame, blind, paralytic or suffering from any serious or chronic disease. They should all be of good physique, good health and good bearing.

4. Every sane human being of adult mind, irrespective of caste, creed, country, climate, race or sex, is entitled to be administered *Amrit* on his making a voluntry and solemn request for it, and thus to be enrolled into the Order of the Khalsa.

5. The aspirant for *Amrit* should have had a full bath, including that of the head-hair, should be neatly and properly dressed, be in possession of the five symbols of the Khalsa—uncut hair, a comb duly tucked up in the tress-knot of his head-hair, an iron bangle on the right wrist, a sword in the belt, and short breeches upto the knees. He should wear a turban on head.² He should stand respectfully in front of the dais on which the *Guru Granth* has been opened.

6. One of these five officiants then should put the following questions publicly to the aspirants or each aspirant for *Amrit*:

Sikhism enjoins love and worship of the One Creator in contradistinction to the creatures. This worship must be implemented through selfless service of humanity and compassion towards all

² Proper Vedic, Brahmanical, custom is to keep the head bare on solemn occasions of formal ceremonies and religious rituals. There is a Vedic term, *vrātya*, which occurs in the *Vājasaneyi-samhitā* (xxx.8), *Taittirya-brahmaṇa* (III.4.5.1) *Atharva* (XV.2.1) and *Panchavimsha-brahmana* (XVII.1-4), besides other vedic texts, which obviously refer to a non-vedic people and culture. *Vājasaneyi-samhitā* includes the *vrātyas* as permissible for *puruṣa amedha*, 'human sacrifice'. In the *Śrauta-sūtras* the son of an uninitiated man is considered a *vrātya* and those not properly initiated are described as *huna*, degraded. *Manusmṛti* regarded Lichhavis, the clansmen of Gautama, the Buddha, as *Vratya-Kṣatriyas*. Keith and Macdonell assert in their *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects* (II) that the principles of the *vrātyas* "were opposed to those of the Brahmins". As Pāli texts and ancient *stūpa* sculptural portrayals tell us, the leading members of the *vrātya* clan wore a head dress, called *uṣṇiṣa*, that is, a turban. In Pāli (Deval : *mahāpurusa*) and Buddhist Sanskrit texts, *uṣṇiṣa*, a turban, is described as one of the thirty-two marks of a *mahāpurusa*, a greatman, or the opposite number of the vedic, *arya*, 'the noble man'. This *mahāpurusa*, the Hindu Superman, is that which is referred to in the *Guru Granth* as the 'one who is fully integrated personality and whose head is crowned with a turban', *sābat sūt dastār sirā*. (Mārū Solhe M 5, GGS, p. 1084).

living creatures. Such selfless service and compassion must be inspired by continuous and progressive understanding of the Guru's Word as recorded in the *Guru Granth*, broad-based on the yogic discipline of the Name. Holy congregation is the context of this great discipline, and the Khalsa is the society pledged to propagate and perpetuate this holy way of life, through which the mankind shall be blessed in the beginning, shall be blessed in the middle, and shall be blessed in the end, without end and for ever. Do you, after due consideration and voluntarily, accept this way of life ?

7. When the aspirant has answered, "I do", one of the five officiants should perform *ardās*, the congregation-prayer, and then through sortilege from the *Guru Granth*, ascertain the "Orders" of the Guru. Thereafter, one of the five officiants should stand up and addressing the holy congregation in its capacity as the Acting Guru, the representative of the *Guru Panth*, should ask : "Have we the permission of the Guru to prepare and administer *Amrit* to the aspirants ?" On receiving the assent of the holy congregation, which is usually given by some or all members of the holy congregation, saying in unison, *Guru ki āgyā hai*, "The Guru giveth the permission", all the five officiants, 'the five beloved ones' who now are transubstantiated into the original Five Beloved Ones, to whom Guru Gobind Singh first administered *Amrit* on March 30, 1699, and who are now under the miraculous captaincy of Guru Gobind Singh himself, should sit in a circle on the already appointed place, where a round bowl of pure steel, full of pure water, is placed in the centre. In this bowl of water should rest, handle upward, a double-edged sword of pure steel, and sugar plums or pure sugar should be added to the contents of the bowl. All the five officiants should then assume the hero-posture *virasana*³ which

³ *Bit*, or *vira*, literally means a hero, one who is endowed with *vīryam*, heroic efforts. Hero-posture is the one considered most appropriate for shooting arrows from a bow, in battle array. The ideal hero is portrayed in Indian sculpture and iconography by the carved figure of a *tirthankar*, such, for instance, as is represented by the statue of Rīṣabhanātha at Mount Ābu Jaina temple complex (11th century) and the stone colossus at Gommateśvara at the Śrāvastīlagola mound (10th century). Here, the Ideal Man stands erect in the attitude of *kayotsarga*, "dismissing the body," in a relaxed immobile posture, (To continue)

consists of placing the right knee on the ground with its heel forming the stool and seat for the body, while the left knee points heavenwards, and the left toe firmly planted on the ground. Then, all the five officiant should visualize in their minds the archetypal form of Guru Gobind Singh, tall, erect, dark blue clad, wearing an aigrette of pure dazzling gems on His steel-discus-laced peaky turban, with a white hawk on his left hand and a pure steel lance in his right, "fully armed"⁴, with a dark blue steed as his mount or vehicle. They should then fix their minds' gaze within, on this archetypal form of the Guru, "as the tortoise withdraws his limbs underneath his shell," as the *Bhagavadgītā* (II.58) graphically says. Thus, firmly postured and self-controlled, one of the officiants should firmly hold the handle of the double-edged sword in his right hand and place the tips of the five fingers of the left hand on the edge of the steel bowl, while the remaining four officiants should place the fingertips of both the hands on the edges of the steel bowl. All the five officiants should fix firm gaze of their eyes into the

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with arms held down. He has a fully developed chest, a firm abdomen, normal and unbulged and, otherwise an athletic figure of almost Greek proportions. He is *vīra*, a hero, for he has conquered his lower self and achieved the supreme human victory. That is why the twenty-fourth Jaina *Tīrthankara*, is styled, *Mahavīra*, the great hero. It was a happy admixture of these two ideals, the physical and the spiritual, which Guru Gobind Singh had in view, with primacy of the spiritual, ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇ ਸੂਰਾ ਵਰੀਆਖੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਦੁਸਟੁ ਅਹੰਕਰਣੁ ਮਾਰਿਆ (GGS, p. 86) : 'a true and mighty hero is one who has conquered and fully vanquished his lower self.'

- ⁴ 'Fully armed' means, wearing five traditional arms, a sword, a dagger, a bow and the quiver, a musket and a lance. In one of the famous extant 'royal edicts', *hukamnamahs* by Guru Gobind Singh, issued on 2nd October, 1707 and one by Banda Singh Bahādur in 1710, the phrase, *panj hathiār banh ke darsan kau avānā*, the reference is to these five traditional arms of the 17th and the 18th centuries. These writs are referred to by Teja Singh and Ganda Singh in *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, p. 77; also by Shamsher Singh Ashok in his *Nishān te Hukamname*, pp. 102-3.

The archetypal man, Vishnu, the All-pervading God, has *pañchāyudha* as one of His names, that is, 'Five-weaponed'. The five weapons which this Primal Man is portrayed as carrying are : (1) Mace or *gada* that crushes the skull of the evil. (2) *Saranga*, the bow that releases target-hitting arrows. (3) *Chakra*, sharp-edged discus missile, (4) *Nandaka*, the ever-sharp sword, and (5) *Śankha*, the conch-shell war-bugle that demoralizes the enemy even before the latter enters the battle-arena.

water of the bowl⁵, while the first officiant should then recite the *Japu* of Guru Nanak all the while stirring the contents of the bowl with the sword. In a similar manner, the *Jāp* of Guru Gobind Singh should then be recited by the second officiant. And then the *sudhā swayyās*, and then the *benati chaupai* of Guru Gobind Singh; and then the *ānand* (five first and the last stanzas) of Guru Amar Dās should be recited in a similar manner, in firm voice, clearly pronounced by the third, fourth and the fifth officiants, respectively.⁶ The reciter should keep on the stirring the contents of the bowl with the double-edged sword all the while.

8. After these recitations are over, the bowl should be covered with a white clean cloth, and one of the officiants should carry the bowl in both of his hands, and he should then again lead the congregational prayer, everybody standing facing the throne of the *Guru Granth*, in which the ratification of God Almighty should be asked of the *Amrit* thus prepared.

9. Then the *Amrit* should be administered to the aspirants or the aspirant, who throughout these proceedings, remain or remains in the *kāyotsarga* posture, standing straight and relaxed with introverted minds fixed on the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh, in the following manner. The aspirant or aspirants should sit in the heroposture in a straight line, keeping the throne of the *Guru Granth* to their right. Then one of the five officiants should carry the bowl of *Amrit* on both hands, and another officiant should dip his right hand into the bowl and pour about an ounce of *Amrit* into the cupped palm of the right hand, with left hand of the aspirant forming its base. The aspirant should then raise his cupped right hand to his lips and sip the *Amrit* and simultaneously the officiant who poured the *Amrit* into his cupped palm should bid : '*bol wāhigurū ji kā khālsā wāhigurū ji kī fateh*⁷, "Say, the Khalsa is of the wonderous God, Victory to God." The aspirant should then repeat : "The Khalsa is of the wonderous

⁵ Ashvaghosha in *Vishuddhimagga* lists fixing gaze into a bowl of pure water as
• one of the ten excellent devices for achieving trance, *samādhi*.

⁶ English translations of a few opening lines out of each of these five compositions, are given at the end of this chapter.

⁷ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹ॥

God, Victory to God." This should be repeated five times in the case of each aspirant. Then each aspirant should be required to fix his gaze with open unwinking eyes into the open unwinking eyes of the *Amrit*-administering officiant, while the officiant should throw a few drops of *Amrit* into the eyes of the aspirant, with some force, to cause the shut-reflex, and this should be repeated five times, accompanied by the bidding and repetition of the formula : "The Khalsa is of the wonderful God, Victory to God". Then five times drops of *Amrit* should be sprinkled into the tressknot of the hair of the head of each aspirant, again accompanied with the bidding and repetition of the above-mentioned formula. If then some *Amrit* is left over, it should be sipped by all the aspirants, one after the other, from the same bowl, till it is drained off. All this while, when two officiants are administering *Amrit*, one carrying the bowl, the other passing it on, the remaining three officiants should stand two steps behind, in a straight line, facing the aspirants, and in the attention-posture.

10. When the *Amrit* is thus finally administered to the aspirant, the two officiants should step back to join the other three officiants and all the five, in unison, then should say :

*Wāhigurū*⁸, १ *onkār satināmu kartā purakhu nirbhau nirvairu akāl mūrati ajūni saibhaṁ gur prasādi*.⁹ "Wonderous God. One, Numenon-Phenomenon, Truth, Name, Creator, Person, Without fear, Without malice, Timeless, Form, Unborn, Self-existent-subsistent, Light, Through Grace." And the aspirants should then repeat, in unison, the same formula. This should be done five times.

11. Then one of the officiants should address the seeker or the

⁸ *Wāhigurū* is the focal word around which the Sikh yogic discipline of the Name revolves. It was adopted as the basic concept of Sikh theology and the esoteric essence of Sikhism, from the times of Guru Nanak. It is found in the revelations of the early Sikh Gurus, as preserved in the *Guru Granth*. It, certainly, was not originally coined by the Sikh Gurus, and is demonstrably of an ancient origin. *Wahu* occurs in the *Rgveda* (IV. 33.5) itself, where it is used in the meaning of 'hail', 'bravo', but it is not current in the classical, post-vedic Sanskrit that finally emerged as a polished literary language in the 3rd and the 4th centuries. The Chinese pilgrims who visited India in the seventh century, testify that, in the

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Buddhist congregations when any exposition was made of some profound or basic metaphysical doctrine of the religion, it was customary for the members of the congregation to murmur in appreciation, "*wāhu wāhu*" (wonderous, wonderous) and a reference to this practice exists in the *Guru Granth* itself, (ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸਦਾ ਕਰਹਿ) The writer of these lines has himself witnessed this practice in vogue in the assemblies of the Namdhari Sikhs, at their headquarters, Bhaini Sahib. In the occult Tibet, the expression, *samyagya*, is uttered or written before all sacred knowledge, indicating that the teachings are too profound and esoteric to be taught to, or comprehended by, any, save the purified and the disciplined. The formula is itself regarded as a seal of secrecy on the esoteric teachings. *Samyagya* is the exact equivalent of the Sikh esoteric formula, *wāhigurū*. *Samya* means infallible knowledge, which is complete realization of the Self, and *gya* word of the Tibetan language, is originally a Sanskrit word, which means, wonderous, *wāhu*. The meanings of the formula, *wāhi gurū* have been given by the famous Sikh theologian, Bhai Santokh Singh, in his *Nanak Prakash* (I.(i) 1-62-63) as follows : "*Wahu* means wonderous, that which cannot be described by means of verbal proposition or logical formulation. *Gu* means, Inertia, Matter, Nescience, Transience, and *rū* means the destroyer of them, the Light which animates, and sustains Pure Consciousness." (ਵਾਹੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਚਰਨ ਕੋ ਹੋਈ ਅਚਰਨ ਤੇ ਪਰ ਉਕਤ ਨ ਕੋਈ। 'ਗੁ' ਤਮ ਤਨ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਅਨਿਤ। 'ਰੂ', ਪਰਕਾਸ਼ ਕੀਓ ਜਿਨਿ ਚਿਤ੍ਰ।) In I.(i), 1.57, 37-44, true exegesis of *wāhigurū* is further given in impressive and detailed philosophical exposition. The formula taught to the initiate, when he is enrolled into the Khalsa Brotherhood, prefixed by the esoteric utterances, *wāhigurū*, speaks of the basic Truth and Knowledge of the Sikh religion and practice.

As for the numeral 'ੴ' with which commences the *mūlmantra*, the root postulation of Sikh theology, it is not to be confused with the qualifying adjective, '*ek*', 'one', for in the *Guru Granth*, the word, '*ek*' and the numeral, '1' both occur before the premier Name of God, *Onkār*, at numerous places. Where the word '*ek*' occurs before *Onkār*, it is a qualifying adjective, meaning the One and only God, but where the numeral, '1' occurs it is to be understood as a proper noun meaning the God, for, Numerology postulates that numbers, as they stand for quantities in mathematics, also have significance *qua* numerals. Pythagorus, who set up a Greek School of Wisdom in Crotona (Italy) in about 530 B.C., expounded this idea that has since passed into the universal currency of philosophic concepts. Thus, the numeral '1' signifies the God, numeral 2, the dichotomy of God and Evil, numeral 3, the Trinity of the Supreme of all religions and the triad of the Dialectical Materialism, numeral 4, the Elements, and numeral 5, the Light, numeral 6, the Regeneration, numeral 7, the Planets, and so on and so forth. '*Ek*' and 'ੴ' in the Sikh scripture are neither identical nor the same thing.

9 ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥

seekers of *Amrit* thus :

Today you take a new birth in the House of the Guru.¹⁰ You have become a member of the Khalsa Brotherhood. Guru Gobind Singh is the Father and holy Sahib Kaur¹¹ is the mother of the Khalsa Brotherhood. Your birth-place is Sri Kesgarh Sāhib, the Blessed Fort of the Uncut Hair,¹² and you are a citizen of Anandpur Sāhib, the Town of Bliss that is beyond words.¹³

Your previous race, name, genealogy, country, religion, customs and beliefs, your subconscious memories and pre-natal endowments,

¹⁰ In the Pali Canon Gautama, the Buddha, says to the newly initiated *bhikkhu*, *Itivuttakam*, 100, "Thou art now my son, born out of my mouth, the son of the Dharma." When Jesus was baptised by John, the Baptist, the words uttered were : "Thou art my loving son : this day have I begotten thee." Luke, iii. 22.

¹¹ A celibate wife of Guru Gobind Singh, who was granted the privilege of adding sugar plums to the *Amrit* that was first prepared by the Guru on March 30, 1699.

¹² The geographical location of the place, called Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib, is on a spur of a mound in the town of Anandpur Sāhib, in the Indian Punjab. For the significance of the uncut hair, see, Chapter III.

¹³ The name of the town, Anandpur, is the literal equivalent of the Mahāyana Buddhist concept of *Sukhavatī*, contained in the text, *Sukhavatīvyūha*. *Sukhavatī* is a luxuriant apocalyptic heaven, situated in the *Dharmadhatu*, the Region of Pure Forms, divorced from desire and presided over by the *bodhisattva* Amitabha. Into this heaven are born all those, who, through faith, have controlled and canalized their emotions to the Ideal. The paradise of Muhammad, described in the *Qurān*, appears to be but a confused and fragmentary copy of this paradise of the *Sukhavatīvyūha*. Amitabha, the presiding deity of this heaven, in his previous life on earth, was a king, who moved by the preachings of the Buddha of his age, renounced the throne and the world to achieve the highest realization, the Buddhahood. At some stage of his spiritual quest and career, he made a series of famous vows (*pranidhān*), the eighteenth of which is as follows : "If after my obtaining Buddhahood, all beings in the ten quarters should not desire, in sincerity and faith, to be born into my region, the *Sukhavatī*, and if they should not be born by only thinking of me ten times (except those who have committed the five grave offences and are abusive of the true Dharma), may I not attain the Nirvān," (Quoted in Pratt, *The Pilgrimage of Buddhism*, p. 480). thus Amitabha renounced the reward of his efforts in order to preside over the *Sukhavatī* "until all beings had arrived there."

Citizenship of Anandpur by the Khalsa signifies nothing less than the ideal of Amitabha, the Bhakti Yoga at its best, where the ideal of the service of humanity is grounded in a grand compassion, the deliberately cultivated power of self-abnegation and self-realization, where through Grace awakened within, the clamour and glamour of the illusion of the individual self dies away.

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saṁskāras, and your personality-traits have today been burnt up and annihilated. Believe it to be so, without a doubt and with whole of your heart. You have become the Khalsa, a sovereign man today, owing

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This has been clearly enunciated in the *Guru Granth* itself in reference to the meaning and significance of the word *ānanda*.

In the Upaniṣads, *ānanda* is enumerated as an ingredient, constituent attribute of the Absolute Reality, which is *sat-chit-ānanda*, according to *Sidhantarahasya* of Vallabhācharya (1470-1522) meaning exactly what Bradley says of it : "The Perfect means the identity of idea and existence, accompanied by pleasure." (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 244). Older Upaniṣads ascribe to soul three states corresponding to the bodily conditions of waking, dream-sleep and deep sleep, *jāgrti*, *svapna*, *suṣupti*, and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* identifies this last state, condition, with Brahma, the Absolute Reality : This is the *Brahma-loka*. This is the highest world. This is His highest Bliss. All other creatures live on a small portion of that bliss, *ānanda* (IV. iii, 32).

In *Taittiriyaopaniṣad* (III.6), *ānanda* is the only and sole attribute of Absolute Reality : "from *ānanda* all existences are born, by *ānanda* they remain in being and increase and to *ānanda* they depart." Aurobindo in *Life Divine* (I, p. 155) comments on this text by stating that "delight is existence, delight is the secret of creation, delight is the root of birth, delight is the cause of remaining in existence, delight is the end of birth and that in which creation ceases."

In later Upaniṣads, however, a fourth state, *chaturtya* or *turtya* is added in which bliss, obtained in deep dream-free sleep, is accompanied by consciousness. The *Māṇḍūkya* calls this penultimate stage, as *ekātma-pratyasāra*, that is, founded solely on the certainty of its own self. Gaudapāda (8th c.) says that, "in it there awakens the Eternal which neither dreams nor sleeps." (*Kārika*, I. 15.).

The Sikh scripture, *Guru Granth*, however, speaks of an *ānand*, Bliss, which is distinguishable from and which is claimed as higher than and superior to this static self-absorbed *ānand*, an *ānand* which is grounded in and which generates pure selfless activity on the level of the phenomenon. This is the *ānand* of what Bergson would call the 'Mysticism of Personality' as contra distinguished from the 'Mysticism of Infinity' :

Many have talked of *ānand* but *ānand* (as made truly known only in the teachings of Sikhism), is known only through the Word of the Guru and through the grace of God. Through His infinite compassion the Guru strikes off the chains of nescience and delusion by bestowing a clean vision, the sight that penetrates to the heart of the Being. These men achieve self-autonomy and inner freedom of the soul as they are cleansed and purified by the Truth revealed through the Guru. Nanak says, this is the *ānand* and this *ānand* is known through Guru's Revelation."

ਆਨੰਦੁ ਆਨੰਦੁ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਕਹੈ ਆਨੰਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ॥

ਜਾਣਿਆ ਆਨੰਦੁ ਸਦਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਪਿਆਰਿਆ॥

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allegiance to no earthly person or power.¹⁴ One God Almighty, the Timeless, is your only Sovereign to whom you owe allegiance, and He alone is entitled to your devotion and worship. The way to final fulfilment of human destiny is laid down in the revelations of the *Guru Granth*, the teachings of the Ten Gurus. Follow this way and no other. Learn Gurmukhi, if you do not already know it. Read the *Guru Granth* or hear it read out and explained daily as far as practicable, and recite the five compositions of the Gurus, the first three in the morning, the fourth at sunset, and the last before retiring for the night, viz. the *Japu*, the *Jāp*, the *Sudhā Swayyās*, the *Rahirās* and the *Kīrtan Sohilā*. Keep intact five symbols of the Khalsa, the five K's—the uncut hair (*keśā*), a comb (*kaṅghā*), an iron bangle (*karṛā*), a sword (*kirpān*) and short drawers (*kachhā*). Do not commit these four grave breaches of discipline :

- (1) Trimming or shaving hair of the body; (2) eating kosher meat or that prepared in a similar manner by Muslims;¹⁵ (3) having

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ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਕਟੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਅੰਜਨੁ ਸਾਰਿਆ॥
ਅੰਦਰਹੁ ਜਿਨ ਕਾ ਮੋਹੁ ਤੁਟਾ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੈ ਸਵਾਰਿਆ॥
ਕਰੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਏਹੁ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਹੈ ਆਨੰਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ॥

Rāmkalī, Anand, M3, GGS, p. 917.

This concept of *anand* is akin to that referred to in the oldest *Kāthopaniṣad* (11.3.15).

यदा सर्वे प्रसिद्यन्ते हृदयास्त्येह प्र-त्ययः ।

अथ सर्वोऽसृतो भवत्येतावद्धृदयं शास्त्रम् ॥

(When all the complexes and knots of the psyche and human mind are resolved and opened, the man while still in his mortal frame becomes an immortal god; this is the essence-teaching of all true scriptures.), Such was intended to be a member of the Order of the Khalsa, a spiritually liberated man, tirelessly engaged in selfless service and high guidance of society.

¹⁴ *Khalsa* is a Perso-Turkish administrative term, which means, 'royal'; 'not subordinate to any one'; 'answerable to no subordinate'; 'sovereign'; 'directly administered by the sovereign'.

¹⁵ According to the ancient Hindu tradition, only such meat as is obtained from an animal which is killed with one stroke of a weapon, thus causing instantaneous death, without exciting fear glands secreting poisons into its blood stream, and without causing harmful psychic waves to emanate from the animal

(To continue)

sexual relationship with a *turkaṇī*, that is outside the martial bond; and (4) using tobacco.¹⁶

Any of these grave breaches of discipline results in automatic suspension of the culprit from the membership of the Khalsa and a re-initiation ceremony of *Amrit* administration in full is then necessary, after penance, for restoration of his original status. Till such re-enrolment, he is a *patit*¹⁷ a fallen limb of the Brotherhood. Social intercourse with such *patits*, as have committed the first and the last of these four grave offences, is forbidden to the Khalsa, till expiation and re-initiation. Remain ever ready to serve the Khalsa *panth*, and through it the whole mankind. Whatever you earn as your livelihood,

(Continued)

minds, is fit for human consumption. Under the influence of compassionate Buddhism, the flesh became taboo to the generality of the Hindus. With the establishment of Islam, and the Muslim political hegemony in India, it became an item of State policy not to permit slaughter of animals for food, in any other manner except that made lawful by the *Qur'an*, which is the kosher method of slowly severing the main blood artery of the throat of the animal, while reciting religious formulate, the main object of slaughtering in this manner being a "sacrifice" to God to expiate sins of the slaughterer, and its flesh as food being only a secondary object. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (*Leviticus*, 17.17). Guru Gobind Singh took a rather serious view of this aspect of the whole matter, and while making it permissible to eat flesh as food, repudiated the whole theory of this expiatory sacrifice, and the right of the ruling Muslims to impose it upon others. He made the ancient practice of obtaining meat by instantaneous death, *jhataka*, as obligatory, but for food only.

¹⁶ For significance of abstinence from tobacco, see Chapter IV.

¹⁷ The word first occurs in *Chhandogyopaniṣad* (v.10.9) :

स्तेनो हिरण्यस्य सुरा पिबैश्च गुरोस्तत्पमावसन्नद्वाहा च

एते पतन्ति यत्वारः पञ्चमश्वास्ते रिति ।।

"They are the fallen beings, *patanti*, who are guilty of murder, theft, adultery or drunkenness." Here the ethical norms are employed to designate a moral turpitude indicative of a single wrong act, while in its Sikh variation the term refers to a total relapse from the new level of personality attained and claimed by an individual at the time of his initiation into the Khalsa Brotherhood. The idea that social intercourse with the guilty is abetment of the guilt, the gravity of which is equal to that of the guilt itself, is also traceable to the *Chhandogyia* (V.10.9) which says that 'along with the aforementioned guilty ones, the fifth guilty one is he who consorts with them,' *Panchamashchānstairiti*

which must be lawful and through legitimate creative effort¹⁸, a one-tenth of it must be donated to further common weal, to the Public Treasury of the Khalsa, and all your life must be lived in a Sikh-like manner, which means the discipline of Name, earning of livelihood through legitimate and creative effort, eschewal of all forms of exploitation of man by man, and sharing the fruits of your labours with others in a brotherly spirit of love. Be a disciplined member of the Khalsa¹⁹

¹⁸ Guru Nanak laid down as the basic principles of Sikhism the triple activity of practice of the Name, earning of livelihood through legitimate and creative effort, and sharing of possessions in a spirit of love and service, *nām japo, kirt karo, vand chhako*, as the *Janamsakhis* record. The Sikh doctrine of the Practice of the Name is, in principle, the same, as the *jap* of Hinduism, *buddhānusmṛti* of Buddhism, and *dhikr* of Islam. It is the constant practice of withdrawing the mind from its surface vortex of memory, sense impressions and desires, so as to delve into the deep peaceful layers of its personal subconscious and universal unconscious regions. This is the whole essence of the science of Yoga, which alone can reveal the secret laws of the fissionable spiritual energy capable of furthering purposive and mnemonic evolution of man. The ancient Jews believed that, "the Name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe." Prophet Joel is made to say in the Old Testament, "Whosoever shall call on the Name of God, shall be delivered." It was this practice which Guru Nanak made the corner-stone of the way of life that he preached. Again, it is an ancient tradition in India, and the basis of monastic life elsewhere that those who pursue religion as the main discipline of their lives, must not engage in any useful trade or profession of profit to earn their livelihood. This is the starting point of Jaina and Buddhist disciplines and, in the Hindu *Manavadharmashastra*, it forms the basis of the last two stages of discipline of man's life, namely the forest-dweller, *vānaprastha*, and the Monk stage, *sannyās*. Gautama, the Buddha, in his lifetime, was accused that by initiating monks into Buddhism, he was uprooting family life and destroying economic structure of the society : *vedhavāya āgato samāno gotamo वेधवाय आगतो समनो गौतमो*, (*Mahavagga*, I. XXIV. 5), 'the ascetic Gautama has now arrived here to turn wives into widows.' This practice was to be abandoned by the Sikhs, for the whole of their religious discipline must be practised in the context of social and political activity. Lastly, a Sikh must never be a party to exploitation of man by man, in any form whatever, for "the Guru intercedes in favour of him alone who shuns exploitation" :

ਗੁਰੂ ਪ੍ਰੀਤੁ ਹਾਮਾ ਤਾ ਭਰੇ ਜਾ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ ਨ ਖਾਇ॥

Var Majh, M 1, GGS, p. 141.

¹⁹ Subordinating of individual effort to collective activity is the essence of the Order of the Khalsa and the idea has ancient roots in the Hindu institutional principles of social organization. Medhātithi (A.D. 825-900), a remarkably (To continue)

always, and if you commit a lapse, confess it before an assembly of the Khalsa, and accept the penance they impose upon you, and be careful in future.

12. The following five groups of men are basically hostile to the organizational purity of the Khalsa. Do not enter into any permanent social relationship with any of them, such as marriage, till the individual duly joins the Khalsa Brotherhood and undertakes to observe its discipline. A disregard of this precept entails culpability (literally, makes the defaulter 'a salaried servant', *tankhāhlā*) :²⁰

(i) The *minās*, the *dhīr maliās*, the *rāmraiyās*, the *masands*, these, who in the historical past have tried to create schism in the growth of the true Sikh doctrine and organization, and those who are *patits*.

(ii) Those who establish social intercourse of common dining or marriage relationship with such as these.

(iii) Those who dye their hair or use make-up in vanity to appear other than what they are.

(iv) Those who corrupt the institution of marriage by exclusively basing it on monetary, somatic considerations.

(v) Those who use drugs or intoxicants to befog their minds with a view to running away from reality.

Be diligent and remain alert always to maintain high standards of ethical purity and excellence.

13. After these instructions have been thus imparted to the seeker of *Amrit*, one of the officiants should again lead congregational prayer, the *ardās*.

(Continued)

progressive commentator of *smṛtis*, explains in his *Manavadharmashastra Bhaṣya* (English translation by Ganganath Jha, Calcutta University Press), the text of Nārada (I.8) as meaning that *kula* is the body of relatives, *shreṇi* a body of traders and others belonging to the same profession and a *gana* as "persons who always move about in groups and unlike *shreṇis* act collectively." In the current Hindi parlance *gana* is used in the meaning of 'people', while 'party' would be nearer to its original denotation.

²⁰ In the Sikh slang, the *sandhyabhāṣa* or 'the twilight language', the term, 'salaried servant', is used to mean a 'defaulter', or 'one guilty of breach of discipline', for the good reason that he who accepts salaried employment owes allegiance to, and undertakes to serve, mortals other than the Khalsa, and therefore, is not a true Khalsa; a free man.

14. The sacred food, *karāhprasād* (which is a sacrament and not physical food) should then be distributed to all present, and all the newly enrolled members should eat the sacramental food from a common bowl.²¹

²¹ The sacramental food *karāhprasād*, a pudding, prepared by mixing up wheat flour, sugar and butter-fat in equal quantities, must be of the value of one and a quarter of the basic currency of the realm or full multiples thereof, to wit, Rupee 1 1/4, or Rupees 2 1/2 or Rupees 5 and so on.

These traditional measures and values are correlated to fundamentally significant concepts of Time and Ritual of the Hindu race.

The Sikh sacred food of *karāhprasād* involves three questions : (1) What is its religious significance, (2) Why must it have three ingredients in equal measure, and (3) Why must its cost be equal to the one and a quarter basic unit of currency of the realm or its full multiples?

It is man's basic religious activity to attempt to enter into personal relationship with God and the basic models in which this relationship is expressed are (a) offering, (b) prayer, (c) ritual acts. *Karāhprasād* belongs to the first mode, of which there are many types, sacramental or primal gifts and expiatory gifts being most important. *Karāhprasād* is a sacramental gift. Gift offering arose in early history of religions and its principle is, *du ut des*, 'I give so that you will give'. In all gift offerings an act of communion is intended which will bring the giver into an intimate union with the recipient of the gift. In the Hindu Pūja rituals as in Babylonian Gilgamesh epic the gods are regarded as materially dependent on the gifts. In the ancient Israelite practices *minha* was the special offering and the Muslims make votive offerings only if their prayers have been answered. The sacramental offering is a special form of gift-offering. Communal eating of the offering is believed to create the same vital and spiritual substance so that the donor will share in the soul-substance of one to whom the offering is made. After the *karāhprasād* is thus transubstantiated, it is shared by the congregation *sangat*, including the donor and, through this communion meal, the donor not only partakes of the numinous substance of the Guru but also establishes sacramental communion with the whole Panth through the Panj Pyārās who first partake of the communion meal.

This sacramental communion feast is not merely a symbolic act which would make it merely a matter of developing ideas, but is a realistic mysteryrite whereby it is intended to change the very human situation of the donor and the participants.

The three ingredients of the *karāhprasād*, in Hindu Numerology, signify *treya*, the three *gunas* or quality-modes of the Existence, *prakṛti*, as postulated in the ancient Sāṅkhya philosophy. The admixture of these three quality modes gives rise to all forms of the phenomenon, but when the *gunas* coalesce in precisely equal measures, the phenomenon evaporates into the realm of the Numenon. When in the case of an individual mind no one *guṇa*, *sattva*, *rajas* or

(To continue)

(Continued)

tamas, predominates over others to cause imbalance, then a state of perfect numinous poise is the result, which is liberation and *summum bonum* of all high religions : *hvaibo tri-guṇātū* is the exhortation of Guru Gobind Singh to the Sikhs, 'strive to achieve the immutable equipoise that transcends the interplay of the three *guṇas*'.

The market value of this sacramental offering being imperatively Rupee one and a quarter or its whole multiples, has two significatory facets. The basic unit of the currency of the realm is due to the State from its citizens in the form of taxes or levies or other similar exactions. Civic man must render unto Caesar what is to him due. But man has a higher obligation to Morality and Religion and he, therefore, must render to the Guru in ampler measure than what he renders to the State. That means a Rupee and a fraction more. But why a quarter of a rupee more ?

This takes us to the fundamentals of the Hindu calendar and its inter-connection with religious rituals.

The lunar day, *tithi*, is variable owing to the elliptical orbit of the moon and this variation amounts to as much as four hours and a half. The solar day, *vār*, is constant, of 24 hours. The time taken by the sun in completing the circuit of the sky from a given star to the same star has been found to be of the length of 365 days, 6 hours and 9 minutes and 9.5 seconds, while the interval between the successive movements of the sun through the vernal equinox has been found to be 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds. The ancient Hindus found that the sun's motion among the stars is roughly the same as the moon's course; only the sun takes the time equal to roughly 12 repetitions of the moon's cycle. thus the 27 asterisms, *naṃśatras* have been divided into 12 zodiacs, *raśis*. thus the Hindu calendar year is essentially the sidereal year, though Hindu tradition is positive that the only valid calendar is the lunar calendar. The Hindu manuals on ritual, the *smṛtis*, declare that all religious ritual depends on lunar calendar, *smarati sarvatra karmāḍau chandramā samvatsaram*, (समरेत् सर्वत्र कमादी चन्दमा संवत्सरसः). That religious ritual must be integrated with the potency of the moment is the principle of this dictum.

Now, moon is the equivalence, in Vedic thought, of human mind. When the Universe was created out of the Cosmic Man, *Puruṣa*, *Rgveda* in the chapter, *Puruṣasūkta*, tells us, that out of the Mind of the Cosmic Man the moon was created' : *chandramā manaso jātaḥ*, (चन्दम मनसो जल). As the moon waxes and wanes in the sky, likewise the human mind goes into states of exultation and depression, hope and despair.

The various phases of the moon are termed, *kalas*, in Hindu calendar.

Charḥadī kalā, meaning, 'the waxing moon' is an equivalence of a mind that never despairs, never admits defeat and refuses to be crushed by adversities and it is the cherished ideal mood which the Guru has preached and for which a Sikh daily prays.

The second phase of the moon, *dūjachandramā*, is the first appearance of the moon visible to the naked human eye. When the moon waxes into one quarter
(To continue)

15. The ceremony of Initiation is now over and complete, and the assembly should disperse forth with.²²

Appendix

Here are English translations of opening passages from the five compositions which are recited when *Amrit* is prepared.

(A) THE JAPU

1. Absolute Form, Truth, Name, Creator, Person. Without fear, Without-malafides, Timeless, Organism. Without-birth, Self-subsistent, Light. Through Grace [realized]. The *japu* [begins]. True, beyond the flux of Time. True, at the commencement of time-cycles. True, within the Time-flux, and True shall also be, Nānak. By human mind He cannot be comprehended even though it cogitate a hundred thousand times. Not by suppressing this cogitation doth the human mind reach the Silence (of Self-realization), even though it achieves single-pointed concentration without disruption.²³ By accumulating the goods and wares of all the world, the desire within is not satiated. No amount of profound wisdom or possession of know-how availeth. [Then] how shall man become one with Truth, how shall the veil of error be lifted up ? Nānak [answers] : Living and acting [in social context], in obedience to the Law of God and His Will, revealed to man through the depths of his own heart. This Law createth the archetypal forms. This Law cannot be stated. This Law createth the

(Continued)

of its full size, it is the notable, indisputable evidence of its potency and course towards fullness. *Svaya* in Punjabi means, 'one quarter' as well as 'well-progressed in its waxing course'. As the *Guru Granth* tells us, 'Guru Nānak has so truly laid the foundations of Sikhism that it shall continue on its progressive waxing course': *abichal niv dhart guru nanak nit nit charhai svai*. (ਅਬਿਚਲ ਨੀਵ ਧਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਤ ਨਿਤ ਚਰੈ ਸਵਾਈ (Gujari M 5, GGS, pp. 500-1).

The *karahparsad* of the market value of a rupee and a quarter is mystical equivalence, first, of man's allegiance to Morality and Religion on earth in addition to and, if necessary, in supersession of, the authority of the earthly State, and, secondly, of affirmation of the Sikh religious ideal of a waxing, unbeaten mind amongst the vicissitudes of the life on earth.

²² *Sikh Rahit Maryada*, pp. 32-37.

²³ The allusion here is to the unflickering, steadfast mind of a perfected yogi, 'like unto the flame in a windless space'. यथा दीपो निबलस्यो नेह, गते स्रोषमा समुत्ता। योगिनो यत्चित्तस्य मुनजतो योगमात्मनः ।। as *Bhagavadgita* (VI. 19) puts it.

life-monads with urge to evolve implanted in them. The lower and the higher is determined by this Law. The pleasure and pain is apportioned by this Law to those who are happy or who suffer. By this Law, some receive Grace and others wander about cyclically. All that is, is within the compass of the Law. Nānak [further explains], he who understands the Law, never then says, "I am".²⁴

(B) THE JĀPU

That which hath neither physical features or peculiarities, nor contours, colours or caste, nor genealogy. There is naught to say for any one, what Its form, what Its complexion, what Its physiognomy and what Its uniform. Stable Entity, the Light *sui generis*, Without Measure, so it may be stated. Count countless gods, the kings of gods, earthly kings and their emperors, [and] the lords of all the three worlds, the gods, the mortals, and the titans, all these [together]: [Still] every blade of grass beareth witness that "Not that", "Not-that". Who can make an all-true proposition *sarvanām* about Thee, and the wise, thus, utter adjectival statements [to refer to Thee]: 1. Salutation to the Timeless. Salutation to the Compassionate. Salutation to the Formless. Salutation to the Incomparable. 2. Salutation to the One without a persuasion. Salutation to the Measureless. Salutation to the One and Alone. Salutation to the Unborn. 3. Salutation to the Non-aggregate. Salutation to the Disintegrate. Salutation to the Nameless. Salutation to the Non-resident. Salutation to the Deedless. Salutation to the Lawless. Salutation to the Descriptionless. Salutation to the Homeless. Salutation to the Unconquered. Salutation to the Unsundered. Salutation to the Unfortified. Salutation to the Undemolished. 6. Salutation to the Spaceless. Salutation to the Non-temporal.

²⁴ ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥

॥ ਜਪੁ॥

ਆਇ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਇ ਸਚੁ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ॥

ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ॥

ਚੁਪੈ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਲਾਇ ਰਹਾ ਲਿਵ ਤਾਰ॥

...

...

...

ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਜੇ ਬੁਝੈ ਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥੨॥

Japu, GGS, p. 1.

Salutation to the Unpierced. Salutation to the Un-consumed. 7. Salutation to the Non-aggregate. Salutation to the Disintegrate. Salutation to the Liberal. Salutation to the Shore-less. 8. Salutation to the One-alone. Salutation to the Many. Salutation to the Substanceless. Salutation to the Un-yoked.¹⁰²⁵

(C) *SUDHĀ SWAYYĀS*

I went to Houses of the *śrāvaks*, the Jainmonks, the True ones, the *Siddha teams*, the Yogis and the Celibates. 1. The Sun-worshippers, the Heliosophists, the Cleanlivers, and the Puritans, and the saints and anchorites of many persuasions. Throughout the world, I saw and scrutinised, but I did not meet any one with the true Religion of the Lord of Life. Without the grace of the Lord of the Grace, the Lord God, all sects are as worthless as worthless. 2. The inebriated war-elephants, covered with gold-cloth bedecked with jewels, without a compeer, protected with glittering mail coats. Countless war-steeds, nimble like a deer, and swifter than a gust of wind. And mighty monarches, as vassals and allies, countless and without number. Such a mighty emperor of men as this, and yet what of it, for in the end he must depart unshod and unclad. 3. They subdued country after country, with bugles blowing and trumpets blaring. Surrounded by

²⁵ ਚਕ੍ਰ ਚਿਹਨ ਅਰੁ ਬਰਨ ਜਾਤ ਅਰੁ ਪਾਤ ਨਹਿਨ ਜਿਹ॥
 ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ਅਰੁ ਰੇਖ ਭੇਖ ਕੋਊ ਕਹਿ ਨ ਸਕਤਿ ਕਿਹ॥
 ਅਚਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਨਭਵ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ ਅਮਿਤੋਜ ਕਹਿੰਜੈ॥
 ਕੋਟਿ ਇੰਦ੍ਰ ਇੰਦ੍ਰਾਣਿ ਸਾਹਿ ਸਾਹਾਣਿ ਗਟਿੰਜੈ॥
 ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਮਹੀਪ ਸੁਰ ਨਰ ਅਸੁਰ ਨੇਤ ਨੇਤ ਬਨ ਤ੍ਰਿਣ ਕਹਤ॥
 ਤਵ ਸਰਬ ਨਾਮ ਕੰਧੈ ਕਵਨ ਕਰਮ ਨਾਮ ਬਰਣਤ ਸੁਮਤ॥
 ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਕਾਲੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲੇ॥ ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਰੂਪੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਨੂਪੇ॥2॥
 ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਭੇਖੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਲੇਖੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਕਾਏ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਜਾਏ॥3॥
 ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਗੰਜੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਭੰਜੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਨਾਮੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਠਾਮੇ॥4॥
 ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਕਰਮੰ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਧਰਮੰ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਨਾਮੰ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਧਾਮੰ॥5॥
 ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਜੀਤੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਭੀਤੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਥਾਹੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਢਾਹੇ॥6॥
 ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਨੀਲੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਨਾਦੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਛੇਦੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਗਾਧੇ॥7॥
 ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਗੰਜੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਭੰਜੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਉਦਾਹੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਪਾਹੇ॥8॥
 ਨਮਸਤੁ ਸੁ ਏਕੈ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਨੇਕੈ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਭੂਤੇ। ਨਮਸਤੁ ਅਜੂਪੇ॥9॥

Japu, DG, p. 1.

herds of war elephants uttering proboscis cries, and thousands of horses neighing in excitement. Such world-conquerors of the past, present and the future are so numerous as to be countless. Without remembrance of God, all these lords of the earth go in the end to where every thing goes in the end.^{3.26}

(D) *BENATĪ CHAUPAI*

"Protect us with Thy Hand as our shield. May our aims be fulfilled. May our mind rest concentrated at Thy Feet. Sustain us, knowing us to be Thy slaves. 1. Destroy all the evil around us. Save me through Thine own intervention. May those, my allies and adherents, live in felicity. My comrades and my followers all of them, O, God. 2. Safeguard me with Thine own Hand. Destroy all my enemies now. May my hopes be completely fulfilled. May I ever remain athirst for Thy Love. 3. May I love naught but Thee. May I receive every blessing from Thee alone. Save my helpers and my disciples. Pick out all my ill-wishers for disablement. 4. Uplift me with Thine own Hand. Destroy my fear of the hour of Death. Be ever our Support, Lord of the Banners, grant us safe conduct. 5. Protector, protect me. Thou, the Lord, the Guide—saint, the Ally and the Beloved, the Helper of the poor, the Vanquisher of the evil, Thou art our Refuge in all the fourteen Regions. (6) Brahma, the creator, demiurge, came into being within the ambit of Time. The Shiva also came to exist within the Time-cycles. The Vishnu, the Primordial Person, is also encompassed

26 ਸ੍ਰਾਵਗ ਸੁਧ ਸਮੂਹ ਸਿਧਾਨ ਕੇ ਦੇਖਿ ਫਿਰਿਓ ਘਰ ਜੋਗ ਜਤੀ ਕੇ॥
 ਸੂਰ ਸੁਗਰਦਨ ਸੁਧ ਸੁਧਾਦਿਕ ਸੰਤ ਸਮੂਹ ਅਨੇਕ ਮਤੀ ਕੇ॥
 ਸਾਰੇ ਹੀ ਦੇਸ ਕੇ ਦੇਖਿ ਰਹਿਯੋ ਮਤ ਕੋਊ ਨ ਦੇਖੀਅਤ ਪ੍ਰਾਨਪਤੀ ਕੇ॥
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਕੀ ਭਾਇ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਹੂ ਤੇ ਏਕ ਰਤੀ ਬਿਨੁ ਏਕ ਰਤੀ ਕੇ॥1॥2॥
 ਮਾਤੇ ਮਤੰਗ ਜਰੇ ਜਰ ਸੰਗ ਅਨੂਪ ਉਤੰਗ ਸੁਰੰਗ ਸਵਾਰੇ॥
 ਕੋਟ ਤੁਰੰਗ ਕੁਰੰਗ ਸੇ ਕੂਦਤ ਪਉਨ ਕੇ ਗਉਨ ਕਉ ਜਾਤ ਨਿਵਾਰੇ॥
 ਭਾਰੀ ਭੁਜਾਨ ਕੇ ਭੂਪ ਭਲੀ ਬਿਧਿ ਨਿਆਵਤ ਸੀਸ ਨ ਜਾਤ ਬਿਚਾਰੇ॥
 ਦੇਤੇ ਭਏ ਤੋ ਕਹਾ ਭਏ ਭੂਪਤ ਅੰਤ ਕੋ ਨਾਂਗੇ ਹੀ ਪਾਇ ਪਧਾਰੇ॥2॥22॥
 ਜੀਤ ਫਿਰੇ ਸਭ ਦੇਸ ਦਿਸਾਨ ਕੋ ਬਾਜਤ ਢੋਲ ਮ੍ਰਿਦੰਗ ਨਗਾਰੇ॥
 ਗੁੰਜਤ ਗੁਣ ਗਜਾਨ ਕੇ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਹੰਸਤ ਹੀ ਹਯ ਰਾਜ ਹਜਾਰੇ॥
 ਭੂਤ ਭਵਿਖ ਭਵਾਨ ਕੇ ਭੂਪਤ ਕਉਨ ਗਨੈ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਤ ਬਿਚਾਰੇ॥
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਪਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਭਜੇ ਬਿਨੁ ਅੰਤ ਕਉ ਅੰਤ ਕੇ ਧਾਮ ਸਿਧਾਰੇ॥3॥23॥

Akalustat, DG, pp. 13-14.

by the Time. All this phenomenon is grounded in the Time. 7. The Time which made Shiva, the Lord of the Yogis, which created Brahma, the knower of *Vedas*. The Time, which made all the temporal universes, To that our salutations. 8. The Time that created all the worlds. And created the gods, the titans and the genii. 9. The Time, which is the same One in the Beginning and in the End. Verily, that is our Light and Guide. To Him alone we salute, Who hath created all the creatures. He giveth unending joys to His own devotees. He destroyeth them that oppose Him 10.²⁷

(E) *ĀNANDU SĀHIB*

"Brethren, the Light of God is my Guide and peace is in my heart. The Light hath brought realisation, and my mind is instinct with joy. The gods and goddesses of Music have assembled to make heavenly music of bliss. Sing ye [also] the praises of God, O, servants of god."

27 ਹਮਰੀ ਕਰੋ ਹਾਥ ਦੇ ਰੱਛਾ। ਪੂਰਨ ਹੋਇ ਚਿੱਤ ਕੀ ਇੱਛਾ॥
 ਤਵ ਚਰਨਨ ਮਨ ਰਹੈ ਹਮਾਰਾ। ਅਪਨਾ ਜਾਨ ਕਰੋ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਰਾ॥377॥
 ਹਮਰੇ ਦੁਸਟ ਸਭੈ ਤੁਮ ਘਾਵਹੁ। ਆਪੁ ਹਾਥ ਦੇ ਮੋਹਿ ਬਚਾਵਹੁ॥
 ਸੁਖੀ ਬਸੈ ਮੋਹੋ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਾ। ਸੇਵਕ ਸਿਖਯ ਸਭੈ ਕਰਤਾਰਾ॥378॥
 ਮੇ ਰੱਛਾ ਨਿਜੁ ਕਰ ਦੇ ਕਰਿਯੈ॥ ਸਭ ਬੈਰਿਨ ਕੋ ਆਜ ਸੰਘਰਿਯੈ॥
 ਪੂਰਨ ਹੋਇ ਹਮਾਰੀ ਆਸਾ। ਤੋਰਿ ਭਜਨ ਕੀ ਰਹੈ ਪਯਾਸਾ॥379॥
 ਤੁਮਹਿ ਛਾਡਿ ਕੋਈ ਅਵਰ ਨ ਧਯਾਊ। ਜੇ ਬਰ ਚਾਹੈ ਸੁ ਤੁਮਤੇ ਪਾਊ॥
 ਸੇਵਕ ਸਿਖਯ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਤਾਰਿਯਹਿ। ਚੁਨਿ ਚੁਨਿ ਸੱਤੁ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਮਾਰਿਯਹਿ॥380॥
 ਆਪੁ ਹਾਥ ਦੇ ਮੁਝੈ ਉਬਰਿਯੈ। ਮਰਨ ਕਾਲ ਕਾ ਤ੍ਰਾਸ ਨਿਵਰਿਯੈ॥
 ਹੁਜੈ ਸਦਾ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਪੱਛਾ। ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਸਿਧੁਜ ਜੂ ਕਰਿਯਹੁ ਰੱਛਾ॥381॥
 ਰਾਖਿ ਲੇਹੁ ਮੁਹਿ ਰਾਖਨਹਾਰੇ। ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੰਤ ਸਹਾਇ ਪਯਾਰੇ॥
 ਦੀਨਬੰਧ ਦੁਸਟਨ ਕੇ ਹੰਤਾ। ਤੁਮਹੋ ਪੁਰੀ ਚਤੁਰਦਸ ਕੰਤਾ॥382॥
 ਕਾਲ ਪਾਇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਪੁ ਧਰਾ। ਕਾਲ ਪਾਇ ਸਿਵਜੂ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ॥
 ਕਾਲ ਪਾਇ ਕਰਿ ਬਿਸਨ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸਾ। ਸਕਲ ਕਾਲ ਕਾ ਕਿਯਾ ਤਮਾਸਾ॥383॥
 ਜਵਨ ਕਾਲ ਜੋਗੀ ਸਿਵ ਕੀਯੋ। ਬੇਦ ਰਾਜ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਜੂ ਬੀਯੋ॥
 ਜਵਨ ਕਾਲ ਸਭ ਲੋਕ ਸਵਾਰਾ। ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਤਾਹਿ ਹਮਾਰਾ॥384॥
 ਜਵਨ ਕਾਲ ਸਭ ਜਗਤ ਬਨਾਯੋ। ਦੇਵ ਦੇਤ ਜੰਛਨ ਉਪਜਾਯੋ॥
 ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤਿ ਏਕੈ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ। ਸੋਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਮਝਿਯਹੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ॥385॥
 ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਤਿਸਰੀ ਕੋ ਹਮਾਰੀ। ਸਕਲ ਪ੍ਰਜਾ ਜਿਨ ਆਪ ਸਵਾਰੀ॥
 ਸਿਵਕਨ ਕੋ ਸਿਵਗੁਨ ਸੁਖ ਦੀਯੋ। ਸੱਤ੍ਰਨ ਕੋ ਪਲ ਮੋ ਬਧ ਕੀਯੋ॥10॥

Rāmavātār Benātī Chaupai, DG, pp. 1386-87.

Nānak sayeth, Peace hath descended into my heart and true Light is my Guide. 1. O mine heart have sorrow and pain no more. He whom God accepts, his problems are solved. Forget not Him, the God Almighty, Nānak sayeth, O, heart mine, remain with God ever. 2. True Lord, what hast Thou not in Thy House. All, everything is there in Thy House, but he alone receiveth whom Thou givest. (Thy greatest gift), Thy praises and Thy adoration, bestow upon us by implanting the Name in our hearts. Where the name resideth, in that heart the divine Music of the Presence of God is heard too. Nānank sayeth, True Lord, what hast Thou not in Thy House.³²⁸

²⁸ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਭਇਆ ਮੇਰੀ ਮਾਏ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਮੈ ਪਾਇਆ॥
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਤ ਪਾਇਆ ਸਹਜ ਸੇਤੀ ਮਨਿ ਵਜੀਆ ਵਾਧਾਈਆ॥
 ਰਾਗ ਰਤਨ ਪਰਵਾਰ ਪਰੀਆ ਸਬਦ ਗਾਵਣ ਆਈਆ॥
 ਸਬਦੋ ਤ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਹਰੀ ਕੇਰਾ ਮਨਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਵਸਾਇਆ॥
 ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਮੈ ਪਾਇਆ॥੧॥
 ਏ ਮਨ ਮੋਰਿਆ ਤੂ ਸਦਾ ਰਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਲੇ॥
 ਹਰਿ ਨਾਲਿ ਰਹੁ ਤੂ ਮੰਨ ਮੇਰੇ ਦੂਖ ਸਭਿ ਵਿਸਾਰਣਾ॥
 ਅੰਗੀਕਾਰੁ ਓਹੁ ਕਰੇ ਤੇਰਾ ਕਾਰਜ ਸਭਿ ਸਵਾਰਣਾ॥
 ਸਭਨਾ ਗਲਾ ਸਮਰਥੁ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮਨਹੁ ਵਿਸਾਰੇ॥
 ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਮੰਨ ਮੇਰੇ ਸਦਾ ਰਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਲੇ॥੨॥
 ਸਾਚੇ ਸਾਹਿਬਾ ਕਿਆ ਨਾਹੀ ਘਰਿ ਤੇਰੇ॥
 ਘਰਿ ਤ ਤੇਰੇ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਸੁ ਦੇਹਿ ਸੁ ਪਾਵਏ॥
 ਸਦਾ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਲਾਹੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਨਿ ਵਸਾਵਏ॥
 ਨਾਮੁ ਜਿਨ ਕੈ ਮਨਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਵਾਜੇ ਸਬਦ ਘਨੇਰੇ॥
 ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸਚੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਿਆ ਨਾਹੀ ਘਰਿ ਤੇਰੇ॥੩॥

Rāmkalī, Ānand, M 3, GGS, p. 917.

CHAPTER III

THE BLESSED FORT OF THE UNCUT HAIR

One of the four grave breaches of discipline, any one of which results in automatic suspension from the Khalsa Brotherhood, is disregard of the injunction forbidding trimming or shaving of hair of any part of the body. Indeed, the breach of this injunction is viewed most seriously, with greater horror, than breach of any other injunction. The uncut hair, tied in a crown on the top of the head, and a natural unspoilt beard, lend an aspect of such physical amplitude and uncommon dignity to a Singh that some observers and scholars have thought it to be the very aim of the injunction in question.¹ The uncut hair, *keśas*, distinguish a Singh from most other races and human groups of the world, and naturally, therefore, it has been concluded by some others² that this, to distinguish them from all others, is the object to be achieved by this particular injunction. Some others, more superficial, seem to conjecture that since unshaved beard indicates, in some way, divorce from "civilisation",³ and a peculiarly wild mode of appearance, the injunction must originally have been intended to lend a wild and frightening aspect to the Sikhs when knighted as Singhs, so as to give them some advantage in battle over their physically superior adversaries, the alien rulers from Afghanistan and Central Asia.

That all these surmises are wide off the mark can be easily shown.

In the *Guru Granth*, the main corpus of which was completed by Guru Arjun in 1604, there are references to the concept of the Cosmic

¹ J.D. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 84; Alexander Burnes, *Travels into Bukhara*, I, p. 285; II, p. 39. See also M. Elphinston, *History of India*, II, p. 564.

² Santokh Singh, *Gurpratapsūryodaya* (pronounced *Sūraj Parkash* in Punjabi).

³ Khushwant Singh, *The Sikhs*.

Man, a concept believed to be of pre-Aryan Jain doctrines, and elaborated in the Kuṇḍa Kuṇḍāchārya's : *Pañchāstikāyāsāra*. That God has anthropomorphic aspect is, perhaps, the most ancient religious concept of mankind. That it was the central conception of the Mohenjodaro religious philosophy and other contemporaneous civilisations of Sumer and Babylonia, becomes more than probably true, when we study pre-Christian Near-East religions. Hebrews, though forbidden to make graven images of their Deity, conceived of Him as anthropomorphic, a belief and tradition bodily lifted into the *Qur'ān* of Islam. Jehovah made the first man after His own image, which is the Adam of semitic religions. In Jain doctrine, which is believed to represent the pre-Aryan Mohenjodaro metaphysics, the cosmic prototypal Man is believed to represent the entire Cosmos, the organism of which has a human form, and which is without a beginning and without an end. This Cosmic Man is beyond the basic Jain dichotomy of life-monad, *jīva*, and karmic matter, *ajīva*. It is not "spirit", as distinct from "matter", but the matrix of both, the common Ground of this dichotomy, the primordial Stuff of the Universe itself, a kind of materialised Spirit or spiritualised Matter, the monistic Ground of the Cosmos. This concept of the Cosmic Man has been adopted, with certain basic modifications, in post-Mohenjodaro Aryan thought as well. "The non-existent, truly, was here in the beginning. What was this non-existent? The life *prāṇa*." There were seven such *prāṇas*, and after consulting among themselves, they came to the conclusion that "we shall never be able to create. Let us make, therefore, out of us Man. . . Those seven *prāṇas* became One Man, the Prajāpati, the Lord of the Progeny."⁴ This is a mythological rendition of the classical Brahmanic view of the matrix and procession of all Creation. In the *Rgveda* itself, this concept of the Cosmic Man is elaborated in half a dozen hymns, dealing with the creation of the world as produced from some primordial material. In the *Puruṣa-sūkta*, or Hymn of Man, the gods are the agents of creation, while the material, out of which they create by cutting up this Cosmic Man, limb by limb, as if in a sacrifice,

⁴ *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VI. 1. 1. 102.

yajña, is the *Puruṣa*, the Man. "Thousand-headed was *Puruṣa*, thousand-eyed, thousand-footed."⁵ "*Puruṣa* is all, that has been and that will be."⁶ "A fourth of him is all beings, three fourths of him are what is immortal in heaven."⁷ "His mouth was the brahmin, his two arms were made the warrior, his two thighs the vaisya, from his two feet the śūdra was born."⁸ The moon was born from his mind, from his eyes the sun was born."⁹ The language and the matter of the *Puruṣa-sūktā* both indicate that it is the latest hymn of the *Rgveda*, suggestive of its pre-Aryan Mohenjodaro base. It not only presupposes a knowledge of the three Vedas, the fourth, the *Yajurveda*, excepted, to which former it refers by name, but it also, for the first and only time in the *Rgveda*, mentions the eternally sanctioned four castes. Its religious views are also different from the other hymns, for it is pantheistic, while the older hymns are not so. It, in fact, is the starting point of the pantheistic religious philosophies and outlook of India. It is this train of thought to which reference is made in the *Guru Granth*, when it is declared that the Cosmic Man, has, "beautiful nose and long uncut hair, *sohane nak jin larimare wālā*,"¹⁰ that this First Man "has unshaved, untrimmed body with a turban on head", "*sābat sūrati dastār sirā*."¹¹ From this doctrine it follows, as a corollary, that human body is a microcosm of the Cosmos-macrocosm, *jo brahmaṇḍe soi pinḍe*.¹² In modern times,

⁵ सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात्
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वात्यतिष्ठददशाङ्गुलम् ।।

Rgveda X. 90.

⁶ The Sikh basic formula, with which *Guru Granth* is prefaced, contains the clause, *adi sachu jugādi sachu*, --Japu, *GGS*, p.1, which is a translation of this Rgvedic text, though, in *Japu*, it is made to refer to God Himself, and not the Cosmic Man.

⁷ पादोऽस्य विश्वामूर्तानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ।।

Rgveda X. 90. 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, X. 90. 12

⁹ चन्द्रमा मनसः जातः चक्षोः सूर्यऽजायत ।

Ibid., X, 90.13.

¹⁰ ਸੋਹਣੇ ਨਕ ਜਿਨ ਲੰਮਤੋ ਵਾਲਾ॥

Vaḍhans M 1, *GGS*, p. 567.

¹¹ . . . ਸਾਬਤ ਸੂਰਤਿ ਦਸਤਾਰ ਸਿਰਾ॥

Marū Sohale M 5, *GGS*, p. 1084.

¹² ਜੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡੋ ਸੋਈ ਪਿੰਡੋ . . . ।

Dhanasari Pīpā, *GGS*, p. 695.

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) claims that he has experienced the whole of heaven in this anthropomorphic way. He states that "the heaven as one whole represents one man, is an arcanum not yet known in the world, but very well known in the heavens."¹³ "Such being the form of heaven, it is also governed by the Lord as one man."¹⁴ "Because God is Man, the whole angelic heaven in the aggregate resembles a single man."¹⁵ The main difference between the Indian concept and this Western vision is that, according to the former, the whole universe is comprised in the Cosmic Man, while in the latter, which does not claim to be a vision of the whole, only the heavens are of the form of anthropomorphic organism.

It is legitimate to seek the real object of the Guru's injunction, forbidding shaving and trimming of the body hair, in this concept of the Cosmic Man. For, Guru Gobind Singh, who made this injunction into a draconic law, was profoundly acquainted with this concept, both through his vast studies of the classical literatures of India and its ancient lore, and also through his direct access to the subconscious Mind of his race as well as of mankind as a whole, which his innate yogic power of merging at will his individual consciousness into the Universal Unconscious, gave him. He makes explicit references to this concept of the Cosmic Man in the meagre and fragmentary portions still left to us, out of the vast encyclopaedic literature which he created.¹⁶

From the illustrative references made above to the concept of the Cosmic Man in the *Guru Granth*, and from similar other observations made therein, it becomes clear that the Sikh Gurus had a theory of

¹³ Samuel Noble, Rev., *Heaven and Its Wonders, the World of Spirits, and Hell : From Things Heard and Seen*, Section 59.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Section 63. Nor, indeed, this concept lack influential and powerful supporters amongst modern European thinkers. Prof. Whitehead envisages the universe as an organic whole, of which the living organism is an exemplar. See Joad C.E.M., *Guide to Modern Thought*, p. 190. Prof. Alexander in his famous work, *Time, Space and Deity*, inclines towards a similar view.

¹⁵ Emanuel Swedenborg, *Angelic Wisdom, Concerning the Divine Love and Divine Wisdom*, Section, 288.

¹⁶ ਕਾਲਪੁਰਖ ਕੀ ਦੇਹਿ ਮੇ ਕੋਟਿਕ ਬਿਸਨ ਮਹੇਸ਼॥

Aesthetics in which they tend to identify the Idea of Beauty with the Idea of the Holy, that is, they postulated a common base for the two distinct, aesthetic and religious experiences. This theory of Aesthetics resembles the Platonic conception, as may be gathered from the *Dialogues* that there is an Absolute Beauty as a self-existing form. This true Beauty is not discoverable as an attribute in any another thing, for these are only beautiful things, not the Beautiful. Love, *Eros*, produces aspiration towards this pure Idea. Elsewhere, the soul's intuition of the Self-beautiful is said to be a reminiscence of its pre-natal existence, a trend of thought which finds such poetic expression in a Punjabi quatrain of Guru Gobind Singh.¹⁷ But this Sikh theory of Aesthetics goes further and adopts a position, which in European thought is approximated by the French spiritualists of the present century, such as, V. Cousin and Jean Charles Leveque, the latter of whom has developed his system in his, *La Science du Beau*. This theory regards beauty as essentially spiritual in nature, and not sensuous or formal, or even expressional. The organic beauty, for instance, in its aspects of magnitude, unity and variety of parts, intensity of colour, and grace and correspondence to environment, is really the reflexion of the Ideal Grandeur and Order of the species. These are perceived by the human reason to be the manifestation of an invisible vital Force. Similarly, the beauties of inorganic nature are to be viewed as the grand and orderly displays of an immaterial Force. Thus, all beauty, in objective essence, is spirit or unconscious Force, acting with fullness and order. This is precisely the view taken in the *Guru Granth* with the difference that no dichotomy of spiritual and unconscious forces is admitted, and this fundamental informing principle of beauty is held to be the God Himself.¹⁸

¹⁷ ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਲੁ ਮੁਰੀਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਰਣਾ॥

ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਰੋਗੁ ਰਜਾਇਯਾ ਦਾ ਓਢਣ ਨਾਗ ਨਿਵਾਸਾ ਦੇ ਰਹਣਾ॥

ਸੂਲ ਸੁਰਾਹੀ ਖੰਜਰੁ ਪਯਾਲਾ ਬਿੰਗ ਕਸਾਇਯਾ ਦਾ ਸਰਣਾ॥

ਯਾਰਤੋ ਦਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਬਰੁ ਚੰਗਾ ਭੱਠਖੋਤਿਆ ਦਾ ਰਹਣਾ॥

Ramkali, Khyal, Paushahi 10, DG, p. 711.

¹⁸ ਰੂਪਵੰਤੁ ਹੋਇ ਨਾਹੀ ਮੋਹੈ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਨੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਗਲ ਘਟ ਸੋਹੈ॥

Gauri, Sukhmani M 5, GGS, p. 282

This Sikh view of ontological significance of Aesthetics is fundamentally at variance with the Hindu insights into Reality. True, that Hindu insight concedes the ultimate Reality as characterised by attributes of *satyam śivam sundram*⁹, the Truth, the Good and the Beautiful, but formal beauty is not accorded a fundamental or high place in their schemata of things real. There is no equivalent in Sanskrit for Aesthetics and the term, *chārutā* is, as a rule, used to designate the enquiry and study of what is pleasurable, the laws underlying beauty and the practical means of applying these laws for creating formal beauty. In the religious domain of Hindus and, likewise, of Buddhists, formal beauty is viewed as potentially undesirable and dangerous, being a matter of sensual perception, and, thus, a snare of maya. It was not regarded as a condition of the soul arising from participation in the Absolute Reality. Thus aesthetic experience and artistic activity were both regarded as unrelated to the higher levels of speculation as well as solemn significant human activity. Buddha forbade the presentation of dharma in ornate literary language; hence the Greek classical severity of Hinayāna Pāli Canon. Buddhaghōṣa (fl. early 4th c.) in his *Visuddhi-Magga*, denounces in no uncertain terms all painters, musicians, perfumers, cooks, beauticians and purveyors of meretricious luxuries. The Jains also warn against being deluded and enticed by aesthetic experience in any form in art and writing, and several authorities totally condemn all things likely to give rise to aesthetic pleasure. Beauty is a distraction and a lure that misleads away from true perception of Reality. It is in the secular Hindu tradition alone that beauty and art are accorded serious recognition and it was conceded that the chief concern of artistic and poetic activity was evocation of aesthetic pleasure, *chamtkār*.

It is on the basis of the aforementioned theory, that the human form is a microcosm of the Universe, the Cosmic Man, that this organic form is representative of the self-existing Ideal form of Beauty, that the aesthetic experience is basically a stem of the ultimate yogic experience of Self-realisation, of which the religious experience comprising the Idea of the Holy is the other stem, that all religious activity is a striving towards this Self-realisation and that, in

⁹ सत्यं शिवं सुन्दरम् ।

comprehending beauty, human reason merely comprehends the Divine in beautiful things, that an adequate understanding of the Guru's draconic injunction against non-shaving of the hair of the body must be achieved. For, a man who would make religion as the highest pursuit of his life, cannot and must not ignore the culture of beauty, in its ultimate essence, and thus deprive himself of its humanising influence which helps to give his emotional experience new forms of expression, and deepens and enlarges his sympathies and intuitions.

This, no doubt, is the real import and significance of a Singh taking his birth in the Blessed Fort of the Uncut-hair, Śrī Keśgarh Sāhib.

There is another but social significance of this injunction, to be derived from a consideration of the negative aspect of the body hair.

Why do men shave and trim their hair? That, if they do so to look beautiful, they are then in a state of grave error and exhibit a deplorable lack of aesthetic culture and taste, is the necessary implication of what has been said above. In the social histories of the East and West, two other motives are shown as operative which account for this custom of shaving and trimming of the hair. In India, from times immemorial, those who renounce the world in order to pursue a life of religion, shave or pluck off their hair and, in Europe, this custom, particularly the shaving off of the facial hair, has, somehow, come to be associated with 'civilisation', with western 'habits of cleanliness', indicative of their racial superiority, in fact, a test and the badge of the western man, the *herrenvolk* of the earth. In India and other parts of the globe, it is this second aspect which, in the current century, has tilted the balance in favour of a shingled head and shaven face—customs which, traditionally, in the East, at least, were regarded as the sure marks of the slave and the ostracised out-caste.

These aspects were, no doubt, present in the mind of the Guru when he forbade trimming and shaving of the hair.

The significance of the removal of the body hair is well illustrated in the story of the "Great Departure", *mahābhiniṣakarmaṇa*, of Siddhārtha Gautam who became the Buddha, when he left his house and house-hold life to seek Truth. After crossing over the boundary of the principality of his father and entering the deep forests, Siddhārtha

Gautam of the Sākyaṃuni clan "thought", so we read in the *Jātak*—

These locks of mine are not
suitable to a monk, and
His hair he cut, so sweet with many
pleasant scents,
This Chief of men.²⁰

This practice of cutting the hair of the head or shaving of the head and facial hair, or better still, pulling them off one by one, as the ancient pre-Aryan practice of the Jain monks is to this day, has brahmanical sanction also.

They cut off the tress-knot of the head hair believing, thus they will attain abiding felicity, the more swiftly.²¹

Nor, indeed, is this practice and the idea behind it that the hair are a symbol of life and growth and those who seek other-worldly ends must cut or shave them off, confined to India. The religious observance of tonsure, practised in the Roman Catholic and orthodox Eastern Churches, is readily recalled to mind. It consists of shaving or cutting part of the hair of the head as a sign of renunciation of worldly life. The reception of tonsure in these churches is the initial ceremony, analogous to the Jains, Buddhists, and Hindu *sannyāsīs*, which marks admission to Orders and to the rights and privileges of clerical standing. Those who receive the tonsure are bound to renew the mark, just as the *sannyāsi* orders of the great Śāṅkarācārya do, at least, once a month by shaving off the hair of the head on the top; otherwise, they forfeit the privileges, the tonsure carries. The idea which lies at the base of all these customs, practices and ordinances is that the hair are the representative of the principle of life, sex and earth, symbolic of the generative forces of the world of Nature. A person who desires to enter upon a spiritual life, must renounce this world of social vortex, and as a gesture of this renunciation, must shave off his hair to simulate the sterility of an aged, bald, decayed man, who is no longer a link in the chain of the generative impulses of the life-process, which is the very essence of *maya*; and the foliage of hair on the head and other prominent body hair, therefore, must be coldly sacrificed to stress the

²⁰ *Jātak*, I, 64.

²¹ *Taittiriya Samhita*, VII. 4.9.

firm determination of the individual to refuse to cooperate with this generative life-impulse of the creation-process. Did not Richard Wagner declare in the Ring : Only he who renounces the power and fascination of life and sex will acquire the ring that bestows on its possessor the power beyond measures?

If, therefore, one desires to traverse in the realms of the spirit, he must sacrifice his hair not only as a symbolic gesture, but also as a first positive act of spiritualising his personality, for hair are the aides and abettors of the life-force, that is maya.

But the life-force, the Śakti, is no less an aspect of the Absolute than its negation, the Shiva, is. An individual, therefore, who has achieved self-realisation, who has become a perfect yogi, cannot but be represented with uncut hair, as Shiva, the Lord of yogis, himself is represented with long matted hair, arranged in a pyramid on the top of the head, like the present day Singhs. Supra-normal life-energy which is now one with the source of the spiritual energy conferring superhuman powers, resides in such a wilderness of hair, uncut and untouched by the scissors or razor. This is precisely the reason also why iconographic Buddha must always be represented with a pyramid of uncut hair, *Chūḍā*, on his carnial eminence. Buddha statues and paintings came to be actually made long after the "Great Demise", *mahāparinirvān*, of the Buddha, as in the early centuries of Buddhism the Buddha was not represented by his likeness. A question is asked in the *Kālingā bodhi jātaka*, by what symbol or structure the Buddha may be duly represented in his absence, and the reply is that, while he abides in his physical body, he can be properly represented by a likeness of the great bo-tree, *mahābodhirukkha*, and, after his demise, by his bodily relics. That is why, in early Buddhist art, the Buddha is invariably represented iconically by his "remains", or "traces", *dhātu*, such as Bodhi-tree, Fragrant Cottage, *gandhakuti*, foot-prints, *pādaavanja*, or by a Reliquary cairn, *thūpa*, (in Sanskrit *Stūpa*), and in no case by a likeness, *pratimā*. It is in the Graeco-Buddhist art that we come across, for the first time, round about the first century A.D., a human representation of the Buddha, with a youthful unbearded expressionless face and a crown-knot of uncut hair atop the head.

It is significant, however, that in its most typical aspect, this human representation of the Buddha, is not really the likeness of a man, but is reflective of the ancient concept of the Great Man, *Mahāpuruṣa*, the Cosmic Man. This is so for an excellent reason.

An individual is characterised by 'name' and 'shape', *nāmarūpa*, and while the 'shape' disintegrates at death, the 'name' endures, by : "When a man dies, what does not foresake him, *na jahti*, is his name : "When a man dies, what does not foresake him, *na jahāti*, is his name or soul, *nāma*" (III. 2, 12). But when that individual becomes the Buddha, he is gone beyond 'shape' and 'name', both, his individuality is irrevocably extinguished, *nirvāṇa*; his personality has been cast-off, *attajaho*, in his case 'what there was to be done has been done' *kattamkārṇyam*, he is released and de-spirited, *vimutta*, and he, therefore, cannot be represented by any individual likeness. Only the Cosmic Man, now, truly represents him.

The iconographical representations of the Buddha, therefore, rightly show a trees-knot of uncut hair on his head, precisely like the one which the Singhs are enjoined to keep by Guru Gobind Singh.

But this representation of the Buddha is without a beard, with a perpetually youthful, beardless face. this is clearly a Greek notion, which conceived of immortal gods as perpetually youthful, and represented them in sculpture and painting as such, and it is not an element from the Hindu concept of the Cosmic Man, for whom the Sanskrit term is *sanātanpuruṣa*, 'the ancient old man'.

This predilection for the perpetual youth and boyish beardlessness, is at the root of the custom for shaving off the beard, and the vague belief that the clean-shaven fashion is, somehow, a mark of a 'civilized' man with the presumption that civilisation is the exclusive heritage of the western man.

This custom and notion, born out of gross vanity and unmitigated presumptuousness, is sustained by unthinking ignorance and perpetuated by a slavish imitation of a paranoic world-conqueror, Alexander, the Great.

One thing seems to support the suggestion of great personal vanity in Alexander. His portrait was painted and sculptured frequently and always, he is represented as a beautiful youth, with wonderful locks flowing backward from a broad forehead. Previously, most men had worn beards. But Alexander, enamoured of his youthful loveliness, would not part with it; he remained a sham boy at thirtytwo; he shaved his face and so set a fashion in Greece and Italy, that has lasted many centuries,²²

and has, till quite recently, become almost universal in 'civilised' societies with the Singhs forming a refreshing oasis in this featureless, barren desert.

The reasons, why the Guru forbade shingle and shaving, are grounded in the metaphysical postulates of transcendental Aesthetics, in the basic aims and objects of the Khalsa Brotherhood, which seek to guide mankind to a path to liberation and self-realization through organised social and political activity, in contradistinction to rejection, denunciation and renunciation of the world, and non-cooperation with the generative, creative impulses of the universe and, thirdly and lastly, in the cultivation of a mature and integrated personality, which deliberately outgrows personal vanity and boyishness, and accepts the principle of growth and aging as fundamental to religious discipline.

Another line of thought may be fruitful pursued while dealing with this subject of *keśa*.

The average man, understandably, regards the subject of *keśa* as the prevalent mode of hair-fashion. What is a fashion ? The dictionary tells us it is the prevailing mode or shape imposed by those whose lead is accepted. What determines the category, 'whose lead is accepted' by the generality of men ? Is it their social status ? Is it their political prestige ? Is it their aesthetic sensibility or moral eminence ? What is the sanction behind the acceptance of a 'fashion', by the generality of men ? Our present day knowledge of the true nature of the psychological motivations and impulsions, which lead to the acceptance of a

²² H.G. Wells, *An Outline of History*, pp. 365-66.

'fashion' or the matrix of a fashion, is altogether obscure. We do not yet know why one fashion comes and the other goes. May it not be that some changes or disturbances in the inner psyche of a group of men or society, that occur from time to time for reasons not yet understood, tend to express or exteriorise themselves in a mode and cut of dress and hair ? It does not, *prima facie*, seem altogether unlikely or far-fetched.

The fundamental problem of a sophisticated man is the affliction known as self-alienation. In the most ancient recorded thought of man, the *veda*, this self-alienation, *kiliviṣ*, is pinpointed as the basic problem of human psyche and the ritual of *yajña* is recommended for regaining the wholeness of the psyche so lost, consequent upon the primal fission of Creation, when the One became many. The psychological techniques of mental yoga and the practices of maceration and body control of the physical yoga also aim at or help heal this fissure of physical self-alienation. The existential dichotomy between man and God is the starting point of all religion and every truly introspective man longs to overcome this dichotomy to achieve this authentic living. Self-alienation is one of the terms of a social being, as it is the predicament of a lonely person, and, therefore, part of adult life, particularly of the intellectual, in whom this disease of self-alienation runs rampant, as does his eagerness to heal this breach, to restore this fissure.

Now, those in whom this breach is healed, as also those who are right on the way to this wholeness of the psyche, how do we expect that their mode of appearance as well as the 'fashion' of their cut of hair—an integral and natural living organ of the body—would tend to express itself, instinctively and effortlessly ? The obvious answer is that the original simplicity of the human nature, the pristine wholeness of the human psyche, during and through its process of healment and restoration, shall exteriorise itself in the 'fashion' of the uncut, untrimmed and unshingled mode of the *keśa* and the body-hair, as enjoined in the discipline of the Khalsa.

For these reasons, Guru Gobind Singh laid down the ordinance, "do not shave or shingle," as a testament of love of God and His

beauty,²³ and "ever remain allies of Goodness and Virtue, and the Khalsa shall remain free and sovereign on earth, for ever and for ever."²⁴ Also, this explains the essentially socio-political context in which the Sikhs have to pursue their religious life on this earth which has made-

the Sikh religion of special interest [to mankind], since it has created not only a political society, but also customs so distinctive that those who profess it, rank in common esteem, as a separate race.²⁵

²³ ਜਟਾਜੂਟ ਰਹੋਏ ਅਨੁਰਾਗਹੁ॥

²⁴ ਸੰਤ ਸਬੂਹਨ ਕੋ ਸੁਖ ਦੀਜੈ॥ ਅਚਲ ਰਾਜ ਧਰਨੀ ਮਹਿ ਕੀਜੈ॥-Bachitranatak, Chaubisavatar, DG, MS Copy with the Sodhis of Anandpur.

²⁵ Charles Eliot, Sir, *op. cit.*, II, p. 267.

CHAPTER IV

THOU SHALT NOT SMOKE

Smoking of tobacco is held in peculiar abhorrence by the Sikhs which originates in the draconian injunction of Guru Gobind Singh to all Singhs to refrain from this practice, absolutely, while previous to this formal injunction, it was merely a general precept of the Sikh Gurus.

Dr. Gaṇḍā Singh, eminent Sikh historiographer in his Introduction to *Agre dī Vār Hakikat Rāi*, (1959) an old Punjabi composition of closing decades of the 18th century, describing martyrdom of the famous Sikh child-martyr Hakikat Rāi (1728), quotes from an 18th century ms. *Sākhis*, which relates that when Bhāi Nand Lāl Puri, the grandfather of the child-martyr, visited Guru Hari Rai (1630-1661) at Kiratpur (Punjab), he humbly asked for the Guru's benediction before departure, at which the Guru said : "First, do not shave or shingle the *keśa*, hair; second, do not smoke tobacco and, thirdly, do not wear a cap (the traditional slaves' head-gear) on the head."

Tobacco is the name given to the leaves of the several species of the *Nicotiana* plant employed for use as a narcotic. It is used in smoking, chewing and snuff-taking, but smoking is the most widely-prevalent habit of the modern man and it is this form of the use of this narcotic or stimulant, which is the subject matter of explicit prohibition in the Sikh formularies, and to which particular objection is invariably taken. Other forms of its use, chewing and snuff-taking, are shunned by analogy, and not by direct prohibition.

It was at the end of the 15th century that the knowledge of tobacco and its uses came to the rest of the world from America. As the continent was opened up and explored, it became evident that the consumption of tobacco, especially by smoking, was universal and of

immemorial usage, in many cases bound up with certain most significant tribal ceremonies. This characteristic power of this narcotic weed, i.e. of establishing a universal hold on human groups where it is once introduced, was, no doubt, one of the reasons why the Sikh Gurus forbade its use by such explicit injunctions. That this power is unassailable is clear from the history of the spread of tobacco throughout the 'civilised' world during the last four centuries and a half, so much so that the spread of tobacco smoking is almost coeval with the march of 'civilization' to backward areas.

The tobacco plant itself was first brought to Europe in 1558 by Dr Francisco Farnandes, a physician, sent by Phillip II of Spain to investigate the products of Mexico. It was a French ambassador to Portugal, Jean Nicot, commemorated in the scientific name of the genus *Nicotiana*, who sent seeds of the plant from the Peninsula to Queen Catherine de' Medici. The leaves and seeds of the plant were brought to Āgrā by Portuguese Jesuits, where the great Moghul, Akbar, held his court, in the first decade of the 17th century.

At first, the plant leaves were supposed to possess almost miraculous healing powers, and the plant was designated, "herba panacea." While the plant came to Europe through Spain, the habit of smoking through a wooden pipe, in imitation of the original device of the Red Indians, spread throughout the world, through English example. The Moghuls had already perfected and spread throughout India, their own special device of inhaling tobacco smoke by first passing it through a reservoir of water, called, *huqqeh*.

It is only recently that, the harmful effects of the habit of tobacco smoking on the human physique have been suspected, and the alarming suspicion is growing that it is a predisposing factor in the dreadful malady of lung-cancer. It is now also established that "there is no more verulent poison than nicotine—that is contained in tobacco-only prussic acid approaches it."¹ And accumulating scientific knowledge on the subject of tobacco smoking by humans, reveals a growingly disturbing picture.

¹ Gustav Schenk, *The Book of Poisons*, p. 159.

Eminent German neurologist, Dr. Claus Claussen has warned that smoking is one of the most dangerous hazards, mankind is facing today.

He says that when a smoker inhales, "the puff damages his brain. It interferes with the chemical control of the blood constituents, such as blood sugar causing brain damage".

Dr. Tibbling of the Neurological Laboratory, Lund (Sweden), under whom Dr. Claussen carried out important researches in neurology, had successfully measured the hazardous magnitude of these damages to the brain. Dr. Claussen says that so long as the smokers succeeded in raising their blood sugar via insulin and got some relief, they would not give up smoking and would continue to allow brain to be damaged. (*Times of India*, Delhi, dated 17.12.75).

The nervous and mental concomitants of the habit of tobacco smoking, have been known to men of acute sensibilities for a long time. Akbar the Great and his contemporary, the Shah of Persia, caused drastic edicts to be issued to countermand this pernicious habit, and prohibitions by a great monarch in Europe,² supported by penal enactments of the most severe description, and the most resolute opposition of priests and statemen, have, likewise, failed to check the spread of this habit. The tobacco dulls the nerves and moral sensibilities, both, is not in question. The illustrious Sir Walter Raleigh, "took a pipe of tobacco a little before he went to the scaffold,"³ and a character of Dostoevsky purposely smokes a cigarette before committing a cold-blooded deliberate murder. Mahātmā Gāndhī abhorred the habit of tobacco smoking with the vehemence of a Sikh and more than once, publicly castigated the habit as 'unclean, unhygienic, anti-social

² "Herein is not only a great vanity, but a great contempt of God's good gifts, that the sweetness of man's breath, being a good gift of God, should be wilfully corrupted by this stinking smoke. . . . A custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black, stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless"—James I of England—William Bragge, *Bibliotheca Nicotiana*, Birmingham; Also, W. Fairholt, *Tobacco, Its History and Association*, referred to in the article; "Tobacco", by J. Paton and W. Ditumar in the 9th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

³ Fairholt, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

and morally indefensible'.⁴ To the writer of these lines, in 1942, the Mahātmā averred that, on moral and social grounds, the habit of tobacco smoking must be discouraged by state action, and on the writer's pointing out that such state action in the past had failed, he half-smilingly remarked that, in that case, Guru Gobind Singh's injunction was the only remedy.

All or some of the more obvious aspects of the problem, particularly the moral and social aspects, must have been present to the Guru's mind when he included prohibition against tobacco smoking as a most important rule of Sikh formulary, but the real and decisive reason for it must be discovered in the deeper layers of Sikh religion, those pertaining to the spiritual realms. Once, during his travels Guru Tegh Bahādur, the 9th Sikh Guru, came to a village, Bārnā, now in the Karnāl district of Haryana, where drought and soil-poverty had resulted in successive failures of crops, and the farmers approached the Guru for a blessing. The Guru freely gave his blessings and added, "If you want these blessings, which is invocation of extra-terrestrial powers to be effective, then give up habit of tobacco-smoking!" They did so and their indolence was gone too, and for a century they prospered in the sense that peasants do, but by and by evil days again overtook the village when Bhāi Santokh Singh, the great Sikh theologian, was residing at the court of Bhāi Ude Singh, the Raja of Kaithal. He investigated the matter on the spot round about 1840, and found that, "as long as the inhabitants of the village refrained from tobacco-smoking, the Guru's blessings brought them prosperity;"⁵ but, when they disregarded the injunction, bad luck returned to them. Bhāi Santokh Singh advised the villagers to give up tobacco-smoking, and he testified that the village grew cleaner and prosperous thereafter.

The observations of the experimental scientists and the normal human sensibility, is by no means the limit and measure of the existence; and that which exists beyond these ranges can be disregarded by human beings only at their own peril. Such, indeed, is the basic presumption of all religions and religious activity which aims at

⁴ M.K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, pp. 25-26.

⁵ ਜਬਿ ਲੋ ਗੰਦਾ ਧੂਮ ਨ ਪੀਯੋ॥ ਤਬਿ ਲੋ ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਸਭਿ ਕਿਛੁ ਥੀਯੋ॥

Gurpratāpsūrya, 11-46.

the enlargement of human sensibilities into the supranormal domains of existence and subsistence.

Well, now, good Gotama, are there *devas*, gods ?

That is certainly known to me, Bhārdvāja : There are *devas*.

Is not this vain and false ?

There are *devas*, Bhārdvāj. If any one is asked and should say that there are *devas*, or should say : it is certainly known, it is known to me—this is indeed the conclusion to be reached by intelligent men."⁶

Monks, I will teach you about the *devas* belonging to the *gandhabba* group. Listen Which are the *devas* belonging to that group? There are, monks, *devas* inhabiting the scents of the roots; there are monks, *devās* inhabiting the scents of heart-wood...the scent of soft-wood, the scent of bark...the scent of sap...the scent of leaves...the scent of flowers...the scent of fruits...the scent of tastes...the scent of scents. Monks, these are called *devas* belonging to the *gandhabba* group ?⁷

These *devas*, or supra-normal beings, are described as "of long life-spans, beautiful, abounding in happiness," and they are not mere abstract names or concepts, but organic entities and persons though made up to subtle non-material stuff.

Mahānāma, the youngman of family, with his riches lawfully obtained, honours, respects, reveres and venerates the *devas* who are worthy to receive his offerings. Because of this, these *devas* have compassion for him, saying : 'Long life, may a long life-span be protected.' Because of the *devas*' compassion, growth may be expected for the young man of family, not decline.⁸

⁶ Williams and Norgate (tr), *Majjhima-Nikaya*, II, p. 213.

⁷ *Samyutta-Nikaya*, III, pp. 250-51.

⁸ *Anguttara-Nikaya*, III, p. 77.

Note : These *devas* or luminous beings, for obvious reasons, are not visible to physical human eyes. Five kinds of eyes, in addition to the human physical eyes, are enumerated in ancient Hindu scriptures : (1) Eyes of Instinct, *shartrakachakṣū*, like those of predacious animals or birds which, in most cases, possess a greater range of vision than human eyes. (2) Celestial eyes, *divyachakṣū*,
(To continue)

No religious activity aiming at mundane success or prosperity and no religious discipline aiming at spiritual progress, can fructify if these supra-normal beings are hostile and in opposition, a fact which the modern man prefers to express by such vague expressions as, 'bad luck' 'mischance', 'unforeseen circumstances', etc. Flowers and incense-burning, associated with religious rituals and ceremonies throughout the ages, are obviously to be explained by deeming these as a device to propitiate the *gandharva* group of supra-normal beings.

Is tobacco-smoking, in any manner, significant in this context?

A Tibetan document, called a *terma*, with the title of *Lohi-Chojung*, has something trenchant to say on the subject of tobacco-smoke in this context. But, to begin with, what is a *terma* ?

Termas are books, thoughts, works, which the great sages of the past wrote for illumination of future ages. The great men of the past foresaw everything. Every century has its vices, so they wrote books adapted to every century. They wrote books in which they gave remedies for all the vices of men and buried them in the

(Continued)

like the eyes of the *devas*, which can see the human world as well as their own, and past and future births of beings in both these planes of existence. (3) Truth-eyes, *satyachakṣū*, like the eyes of saints and perfected yogis, capable of seeing throughout hundreds of *kalpas*, world-periods, backwards and forwards. (4) Divine eyes, *brahmachakṣū*, like those of highly advanced and perfected souls, described as *Brahmagyāni* in the *Guru Granth*, which can see throughout millions of world-periods that have been and will be. (5) Eyes of Light, *Guruchakṣū*, such as are possessed by the Guru, the Buddhas, capable, in like manner, of seeing throughout eternity. It is to the principle of this classification that a reference occurs in the *Guru Granth*, where it is said that "those eyes are others by which My Beloved is seen" (ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇ ਅਖੜੀਆਂ ਚਿਅੰਨਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਤਿਸੰਦੇ ਮਾ ਮਿਤੀ—Vadhans M 5, Śloka, GGS, p. 577). Human beings, in which clairvoyant vision is induced by *namasimran*, or yogic *dhyāna* or in whom such vision exists from birth by virtue of pre-birth spiritual discipline, are alone capable of seeing *devas* with the physical human eyes. Sometimes the *devas* appear unexpectedly to ordinary human beings as well, as is testified in the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Christian and the Muslim sacred literatures. The writer of these lines was blessed by such a vision, at about 11. A.M. on a June day in 1947 at Lahore, when Bābā Rām Singh Kūka, in *deva* form, appeared to him and conversed with him.

mountains, underneath rivers, among the ice-peaks. When the time comes, somebody discovers them.⁹

The very word, *shikre*, (as the Tibetans pronounce, *cigarette*) is ill-omened. *Shik* means 'to demolish', *re* means 'to tear' and it is, thus, a combination of very sinister ideas, indicating, the thing concerned will bring evil and ruin.¹⁰

Padmasambhava foresaw smoking a thousand years ago and more. In his great fore-sight he knew that men, would, one day succumb to the extreme and incomparably stupid vice. . .smoking,¹¹

and thus the warning he preserved in the *terma*, *Lohi-Cho-jung*.

There is one evil custom, which is the fore-runner of the Tempter, *mār*, himself. It is, spreading among the general population...use of the evil, stinking, poisonous weed, named, tobacco. The smoke from this drug defiles the sacred objects of worship, the Images, the Books, the Relics. It weakens the gods above, causes fighting among the spirits of the midheavens, and injures the Serpent-spirits below. From this cause arises an endless cycle of epidemics, wars and famines in the human world.¹²

⁹ Mariani Fosco, *Secret Tibet*, pp. 95-96.

The following account of a *terma* is given by Dr. Evans Wentz in his "Introduction" (p. 75). to the English translation of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, the *Bardo Thodol*, which itself is a *terma* :

"During his sojourn in Tibet at that time (A.D. 747) and during subsequent visits, Padmasambhava (a Professor of Yoga at the University of Nalanda, and a native of Udyān, modern Swāt in Afghanistan) had many Tantric books translated into Tibetan out of Indian Sanskrit originals— some of which had been preserved in the monasteries of Tibet—and hidden away with appropriate mystic ceremonies in various secret places. He also endowed certain of his disciples with the yogic power of reincarnating at the proper time, as determined by Astrology, in order to take them out along with the treasures hidden away with them and the requisites, needed for properly performing the rites described in the texts. . . .According to a rough estimate the religious texts already taken out in this manner. . .would form an encyclopaedia of about sixtyfive volumes of block-prints, each consisting of about four hundred ordinary sized folios."

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 95

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Quoted by Sir Charles Bell in *The People of Tibet*.

All this, however, is bound to strike the average 'scientific' mind as something 'weird', 'uncamy'. This distaste which the *devas*, even if they do exist (Mao-tse-tung recently declared, they do not), have for tobacco smoke; and this being advanced as a serious argument to the modern man against the tobacco smoke, which he so much enjoys; which almost all the civilised peoples of the globe are addicted to, which he finds such a solace to his frayed nerves and mind both; and which renders such conspicuous service to the art of sociability that is the very basis of civilisation. 'Shall the tobacco be forbidden and tabooed, just because of some hypothetical *devas*? What 'scientific' reasons, there are against the pleasant habit of tobacco smoking, *qua* the religion of the Sikh?, that is what an intelligent modern mind asks. And to this an answer must be returned.

The Sikh religion, like all higher religions, tempts man with the vision of integrating the individual little self with the universal self, the World-Soul. For this purpose, it propounds a metaphysics, recommends a discipline and determines a context for this way of life. Since this context, in the Sikh religion, has been determined as political and social activity, the growth of a culture and its ripening into a civilisation are necessary concomitants of the Sikh religion. It is not necessarily so in, some other religions, though culture, subsequently culminating into a civilisation, may be, and, perhaps, ordinarily is, the byproduct of an organised religion. An ascetic religion, for instance, postulates that the empirical existence is an error, and the world of senses is a mirage, an evil temptation and an illusion, which must be shunned and abandoned as the initial step on religious path, without regrets and without any covert desire for return to it. Such religions as Buddhism, Jainism, monastic Christianity and higher forms of Hinduism, not to mention the mystic Islam of Sufism, have neither any desire nor any hope for the improvement of this phenomenal world. A man of this way of life, therefore, does not try to change the society and the world, and social change and politics are, therefore, irrelevant to him. He is alike indifferent to culture and civilisation as such, which both are products of social intercourse and political organisation. The interest of a Sikh in society and politics, however, is direct and vital.

His is, what Schubart calls, the Heroic culture-mentality,¹³ which views the world as undeveloped and chaotic, and which he must improve by his organisational effort. Such heroic man, the Singh, does not accept the world as it is, but he fights against it to change it.

Activity and confrontation are the hall-marks of the Khālsā.¹⁴

Hear, the war-drums reverberate in the skies.

And the deadly bullet flies straight towards its mark.

The soldier well-entrenched in the battle field,

Knows that this is the hour of battle and of victory.

This is the badge of a true soldier—

To fight to the end for justice and freedom.¹⁵

Hail, to the man who lives a life of right activity and strife with the Name of God on his lips.¹⁶

Out of this basic attitude springs Singh's desire for political power, though unlike Schubart's heroic man, he is free from lust for power and pride, service and humility being his watchwords, and in his social and political activity, he does not stray away and move away from God to sink into things empirical, and thus, he avoids secularism as his destiny and tragedy as his end. His end is God and human life on earth as illuminated by God is his destiny

The holy invincible legions of men of religion are safely ironclad from head to foot. Engrossed in the praises of God with hard-leather shields of the Guru's Word in hand,

They are firmly seated in the war-chariots driven by powerful steeds, hissing like cobras, and galloping straight on to the Path of God.

¹³ Schubart Walter, *Europa und die Seele des Ostens*, p. 13 ff. English: *Dynamics* : Vol. II. Ch. 10 and Vol. IV. Ch. 8-16.

¹⁴ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸੇ ਜੋ ਕਰੈ ਨਿਤ ਜੰਗ॥

Rahitnameh Bhai Nand Lal.

¹⁵ ਗਗਨ ਦਮਾਮਾ ਬਾਜਿਓ ਪਰਿਓ ਨੀਸਾਨੈ ਘਾਓ॥

ਖੇਤੁ ਜੁ ਮਾਂਡਿਓ ਸੂਰਮਾ ਅਬ ਜੂਝਨ ਕੋ ਢਾਓ॥

ਸੂਰਾ ਸੇ ਪਹਿਚਾਨੀਐ ਜੁ ਲਰੈ ਦੀਨ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ॥

ਪੁਰਜਾ ਪੁਰਜਾ ਕਟਿ ਮਰੈ ਕਬਹੂ ਨ ਛਾਡੈ ਖੇਤੁ॥

Marū, Kabir, GGS, p. 1105.

¹⁶ ਧੰਨ ਜੀਓ ਤਿਹਕੋ ਜਗ ਮੈ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਚਿਤ ਮੈ ਜੁਧੁ ਬਿਚਾਰੈ॥

Kṛṣṇavatār, DG, p. 570.

Undaunted they charge into the ranks of the enemy thus fulfilling their mission, adoration of God.

They become world-conquerors as they fully tame their lower self.¹⁷

For this, day-to-day divine illumination and fixation of a proper perspective for things secular, he is enjoined upon to live a disciplined life of *nāmasimran*, service, self-control and abstinence. He must avoid gluttony, and all such edibles, as he finds tend to obstruct his finer mentality. He must sleep little and avoid unnecessary talk, and remain poised and alert in his body and mind, the latter ever activated by compassion and charity. Thus, he must become a creator and vehicle of culture, which is simply another name for values of inwardness.

Moderate food and severely controlled sleep with mind and body alive with love and charity. Ethical life and contentment as constant guides. Thus may man transcend his basic limitations.¹⁸

Eating to cater to pleasures of the palate—such as causes disease to the body and obscurity to the mind—this is forbidden to a Sikh.¹⁹

A man of religion detaches himself from the earthly temptations. And he eats to live and avoids gluttony.²⁰

17 ਸੈਨਾ ਸਾਧ ਸਮੂਹ ਸੂਰ ਅਜਿਤੰ ਸੰਨਾਹੰ ਤਨਿ ਨਿੰਮ੍ਰਤਾਹ॥
ਆਵਧਹ ਗੁਣ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਰਮਣੰ ਓਟ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਕਰ ਚਰਮਣਹ॥
ਆਰੂੜਤੇ ਅਸ੍ਰ ਰਬ ਨਾਗਰ ਬੁਝੰਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਾਰਗਹ॥
ਬਿਚਰਤੇ ਨਿਰਭਯੰ ਸਤ੍ਰ ਸੈਨਾ ਧਾਯੰਤੇ ਗੁਪਾਲ ਕੀਰਤਨਹ॥
ਜਿਤਤੇ ਬਿਸ੍ਰ ਸੰਸਾਰਹ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਸ੍ਰੰ ਕਰੋਤਿ ਪੰਚ ਤਸਕਰਹ॥

Śloka, GGS, p. 1356.

18 ਅਲਖ ਅਹਾਰ ਸੁਲਪਸੀ ਨਿੰਦ੍ਰਾ ਦਯਾ ਛਿਮਾ ਤਨ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ॥
ਸੀਲ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਦਾ ਨਿਰਬਾਹਿਬੋ ਰ੍ਹੋਬ ਤ੍ਰਿਗੁਣ ਅਤੀਤਿ॥

Rāmkaṭi, Paṭśaḥ 10, DG, p. 709.

19 ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਖਾਣਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ॥ ਜਿਤੁ ਖਾਧੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ॥

Sri Rag, M. 1, GGS, p. 16.

20 ਓਨ੍ਹੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਤੋਤੇ ਬੰਧਨਾ ਅੰਨੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਬੋੜਾ ਖਾਇਆ॥

Āsā, Var, M 1, GGS, p. 467.

Such values are, in their very nature, created and sustained by a disciplined minority, such as the Order of the Khalsa. That food and physical habits powerfully influence the mind, is a commonplace matter of experience. In the following pages²¹ we shall have occasion to consider at some length, the physiological bases of the inward experience, which is the matrix of all cultural values and impulses. This inward experience consists of ingress into those regions of the human mind which are the opposites of the empirical experience, with which the modern physical sciences deal in the laboratory. These regions are the antipodes of the human mind, of the existence of which the modern man has become increasingly aware, during the last three or four decades, through the work of the psycho-analysts, and which regions are labelled by them as subconscious and unconscious.²² We shall also have to refer to the relation of these regions to the practices and the goal of religious activity, as conceived by the Hindu mind since the times of the Upaniṣads. Here, the point to bear in mind is, that the spiritual experiences, the extrasensory visions, the mystical numena, all have physiological bases or parallels about which most interesting and provocative speculations have been recently made by Aldous Huxley.²³ The whole of the Hindu doctrine of *tapas* is based on this theory of the physiological bases of extra-sensory experiences and para-psychic powers. It is this which has led to the ascetic practices in various religions throughout the ages. It was this theory which Gautam of the Sākya clan put to test and found wanting as a means to the achievement of transcendental wisdom, the *bodhi*, a fact with which the Sikh Gurus amply agree. But this much is demonstrable that a suitable change in physiological conditions of the human body by external aids, such as fasting, mortification, drugs, stroboscopic lamp, hypnosis, and inhalation of carbon dioxide, such as became inevitable

²¹ Chapter VI.

²² Alexander Canon has remarked somewhere that, "India and Tibet can teach us more about Psychology than Freud, Jung or Adler or the exponents of any other thought movement" and, likewise, Freud is recorded as having observed that "Europe made a beginning in understanding depth-psychology not yesterday but only this morning, while the Hindus have been at it for thousands of years."

²³ *The Doors of Perception*; also, Aldous Huxley, *Heaven and Hell*.

in the well-known ancient yogic practices of taking up contemplative abode in sealed caves or artificial domes, facilitates ingress of the human mind into supra-sensuous regions, including those of the archetypal enduring forms and ideas, which are the very stuff of the human culture and surrogates of higher religion and mystical experiences. Just as opium and *bhang*, *cannabis sativa*, are employed by many sects of Hindu ascetics to facilitate these higher experiences, similarly, the roots of a certain cactus plant have been used by Mexican Indians to induce such experiences. Tobacco, as we have already pointed out, is originally a South American herb, and the South American Indians have known, from times immemorial by experience, that the inhalation of tobacco smoke is a most powerful inhibitive of such physiological conditions, whether they are concomitants of higher spiritual states descended on human mind from above, i.e. of non-bodily origin, or on the other hand, resultant of and causally grounded in drug-induced bases.

A person under the influence of mescaline or lysergic acid will stop seeing visions when given a large dose of nicotinic acid.²⁴

In elaboration of this point, Aldous Huxley observes that—

all our experiences are chemically conditioned, and if we imagine that some of them are purely 'spiritual' purely 'intellectual', purely 'aesthetic', it is merely because we have never troubled to investigate the internal chemical environment at the moment of their occurrence. Furthermore, it is a matter of historical record that most contemplatives worked systematically to modify their body chemistry, with a view to creating the internal conditions favourable to spiritual insight. When they were starving themselves into the low blood sugar and a vitamin deficiency, or heating themselves into intoxication by histamine, adrenalin and decomposed protein, they were cultivating insomnia, and praying for long periods in uncomfortable positions, in order to create the psycho-physical symptoms of stress. In the intervals they sang interminable psalms, thus increasing the amount of carbon dioxide in the lungs and the blood stream, or, if they were Orientals, they did

²⁴ Aldous Huxley, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

breathing exercises to accomplish the same purpose. Today we know how to lower the efficiency of the cerebral reducing valve by direct chemical action and without the risk of inflicting serious damage on the psycho-physical organism. For an aspiring mystic to revert, in the present stage of knowledge, to prolonged fasting and violent self-flagellation would be as senseless, as it would be for an aspiring cook to behave like Charles Lamb's Chinaman, who burned down the house in order to roast a pig.²⁵

The point to understand is that whether it is religious illumination and spiritual progress, or whether it is creative activity pertaining to values of culture, it is the inward experience and linear mental activation, that is its source and matrix. Whether this inward experience is spontaneous or the result of purely mental discipline, i.e., a gift of extra-human divine grace or outcome of individual spiritual endeavour, it has a physiological concomitant and base. Conversely, this inward experience is also inducible by chemical aids, through bodily changes of a chemico-physiological character. Whether this latter device is all-sufficient, is not the point here; Gautam, the Buddha, said it was not,²⁶ and the Sikh Gurus discouraged placement of main reliance on it.

Physical maceration and extreme forms of asceticism such as 'penance of inverting bodily postures', does not cure the malady of egocentricity within.²⁷

But the scientific fact itself cannot be controverted. In the one case, where this inward experience has descended from above, the tobacco smoke, whether inhaled by the subject or just present in the atmosphere around, is highly inimical to the descent and unhindered continuance of this inward experience.

²⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 63-64.

²⁶ "These two dead ends, monks, should not be followed . . . That which is among sense pleasures . . . low, of the average man, of the uncultured (literally, *grāmin*, of the villager), un-Aryan . . . ; and that which is addiction to tormenting of the self . . ."

Digha, Nikaya, ii. 313.

²⁷ ਕਾਂਇਆ ਸਾਧੈ ਉਰਧ ਤਪੁ ਕਰੈ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਹਉਮੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ॥

Sri Rag, M 1, GGS, p. 33.

Expressed thus, it becomes clearer as to what Padamsambhava had in mind, when he asserted many centuries ago that the tobacco smoke "defiles the sacred object . . . and . . . weakens the gods above." If the gods above are weakened, man ceases to have communion with the Spirit, and the Light of God is shut out to him, and "from this cause," as Padamsambhava asserts with such concinnity, "arises an endless cycle of epidemics, wars and famine in the human world."

Can it be complained that the seer and the savant, Padamsambhava, overstated the matter, if we view the trends of the world history during the last two and a half centuries, ever since tabacco smoking has become almost a universal habit of global communities? Again, it is a scientific fact, demonstrable by laboratory experiment that tobacco smoke, when inhaled by the subject or experienced through propinquity (although it apparently aids a lower type of concentration that discovers but does not create), acts as a powerful inhibitive of the physiological bases of the genuine inward experience, and is thus destructive of such experience itself.

The problem of smoking is not a question of social hygiene, primarily, nor is it a question of human health, basically. It is both of these and from both the stand-points, it is a serious problem of world significance, constituting an international problem of serious concern to the international organs, as well as the national states of secular bases. But more than that, it is a question of far-reaching cultural significance and spiritual import to the whole of mankind. Prevalence of tobacco-smoking habit is decidedly the most powerful one factor that has, in the recent past, resulted in the lag, which is now diagnosed as the cause of the present ills of the world, the lag between the advance in physical sciences leading to increasing mastery of man over nature, and development of moral values and susceptibilities, the inward growth of mankind appropriate to this scientific and technological progress. Thus, mankind is heedlessly moving towards a catastrophe from which an escape is possible only through conscious effort. Such an effort must originate in a culturally conscious community aware of the value and significance of inward experience. Such a community alone is capable of initiating and spreading the moral ferment that can regenerate and save mankind and avert the pending

catastrophe that is implicit in the purely empirical experience, unleavened by the inwardness of mystical communion with God.²⁸

Such a community was intended to be the order of the Khalsa created by Guru Gobind Singh, and to the members of this Order, the Guru issued the imperative injunction : Thou shalt not smoke.

²⁸ "the existence of mystical states absolutely overthrows the pretension of non-mystical states to be the sole and ultimate dictators of what we may believe."- William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 427.

CHAPTER V

FIVE K'S

About keeping uncut hair, something has already been said. The other four K's obligatory for a member of the Khalsa Brotherhood to keep are, a sword, a comb, short drawers and an iron bangle on the right wrist. The Sanskrit word *Kripāṇa* pronounced as *Kirpān* by the Sikhs, means an oriental sword, that is, primarily a cut-weapon as contra-distinguished from a rapier, a thrust weapon common amongst Europeans. Every member of the Khalsa Brotherhood must always keep a *Kirpān* on his body, but this injunction refers to the *Kirpān* as a symbol, essentially. A symbol is different from a thing in so far as it has meaning also, while a thing has mere utility and no meaning. A symbol must have a meaning, primarily, but it may be a thing of utility also.

The proposition that a symbol has a meaning, gives rise to some interesting speculations.

In a sense, 'words' are symblos, for their significance is not in what they resemble in shape but in what they mean. Are then 'words' and 'symbols' functionally interchangeable ? Do symbols merely perform the functions that linguistic letters can perform, and equally well ?

Till about the middle of the 17th century the European mind was almost totally and profoundly committed to the dignity of the 'word', the verbal proposition : to the belief and conviction that words when handled with sufficient skill and exactitude could bring the mind into correspondence reality. The turning point came with the *Ethics* of Spinoza, which book is a vast tautology showing that unlike numbers, words do not lead to consequent demonstrations, for, added or divided, they give only other words or other versions of themselves. It was this line of thought that culminated in the Linguistic Philosophy

of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), fully developed during the period when the writer of these lines was a student at Cambridge during the thirties of this century. Wittgenstein's entire work starts out from the question, "whether there is any verifiable or conceivable relation between the 'word' and the 'fact'; or whether the 'fact' is not merely the solidifications, in the mind, of the suggestions deposited there by language"? In his writings there is the implicit question ever present : "Can reality be spoken of when speech is merely a kind of infinite regression, words being used to speak of other words" ?

The famous proposition of his, in the *Tractatus*, that "what can be said at all can be said clearly, whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent," is not a claim for potentialities of the word and the verbal proposition. It is a total retreat from the comprehensive claims of the classical European thought.

The root genius of the classic and the Christian mind was to subject reality to the governance of language. Philosophy, literature, law, theology, the arts of history, are sustained attempts by the European mind to enclose within the bounds of language the sum of accumulated human experience, its present practices and its future expectations. The *Code of Justinian*, the *Summa* of Aquinas, the *Divina Comedia* of Dante, are great endeavours at total containment testifying to the belief that all truth can be housed in the side-walls of language.

The educated European mind now, however, is becoming aware that it is a mistake to think that verbal context is the only one in which the life of the mind is conceivable. There are modes of intellectual and sensuous reality, founded not primarily on language, but on other modes of communication, such as, the icon, *pratimā* the religious symbol, the musical note, the evocative and suggestive periphery of the spoken word that lies in the shades surrounding its definitive luminous core.

This, incidentally, is the key to the understanding of the apparent repetitions, verbal tautologies, and numerous other linguistic juggleries skillfully employed in the revelations of the Sikh scripture, the *Guru Granth*, and to each piece and paragraph of it that stands carefully and rigorously set and assigned to a note or tonal

variation of classical Hindu musicology, which musicology postulates that music is the chief language of the mind, when the mind is in a condition of non-verbal feeling. *Ranjayate aneneti rāgaḥ* (रञ्जयते अनेनेति रागः) music is that which evokes a mood, what is felt and what occurs at some level previous to language or beyond it.

By analysing precise nature and limitations of the verbal expression, Wittgenstein has shown keen awareness of the truth that the quality of our speech and the quality of our living are most intimately connected. He knew that the forms of language were deeply rooted in our nature and he spoke of 'deep disquietudes' caused by imbalance between the two. The attainment of final clarity for him meant a philosophy that ends all philosophy, because there is, at least theoretically, an answer to every question. 'If a question can be put all, it can also be answered', he says in the *Tractatus*. But he argues that when all questions which Science and Philosophy can ask, are answered, there still will remain a vast realm of unanswerable questions, "the unsayable, of which one must be silent". Does the 'unsayable' exist? "There indeed, is the unsayable," he says in the *Tractatus*. How can we be sure? His answer is : "it shows itself; it is the mystical". And Philosophy, in the end, will mean the unsayable by clearly showing what can be said; and having shown it, it will have reached its end"¹.

This is the realm of Reality with which the Hindu *maunī*, the 'silent one', through his tongue-tiedness, converses. Such is 'the language of silence' that gave birth to Zen Buddhism that had its birth in the famous sermon of Gautam, the Buddha, conveyed by him through his silence, and referred to in the Pāli text, *Avatamsakasūtra*, which tells us that after three weeks of his Enlightenment, Buddha remained silent while

¹ During one of his lectures the writer of these lines quoted a text from the *Guru Granth* which Wittgenstein made him repeat four times:

If it is sayable, it is within the range of the word.

If it is unsayable, it is outside the steady grasp of the mind.

The real is where the sayable and the unsayable meet.

What the real truly is, is altogether beyond comprehension.

ਜਹਾ ਬੋਲ ਤਹ ਅਛਰ ਆਵਾ॥ ਜਹ ਅਬੋਲ ਤਹ ਮਨੁ ਨ ਰਹਾਵਾ॥

ਬੋਲ ਅਬੋਲ ਮਧਿ ਹੈ ਸੋਈ॥ ਜਸ ਓਹੁ ਹੈ ਤਸ ਲਖੇ ਨ ਕੋਈ॥

Gauri Bawan Akhari Kabir, *GGS*, p. 340.

holding up a golden-coloured flower and yet his disciples received the transcendental message.

Non-verbal modes of conversing with and communicating about the regions and realms of human experience and Reality, though only recently recognised by the European mind, have, from times immemorial been known and accepted as valid by the Hindu mind. The story of the *Dhyāna* or Zen sect of Buddhism is an illustration. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* occurs the famous aphorism : *vakrokti kāmīnāḥ Devāḥ spaṣtokti dviṣāḥ* : 'the gods are pleased only with the cryptic and they hate direct speech'.

Symbol is a form of *vakrokti*, a technique for conversing with and communicating the aspects and layers of reality that are 'unsayable'. Employment of symbol, *cihna*, is a common, ancient device in Hinduism. Fundamentally all things being fragments of the Supreme Unity, things, as they appear, are to be regarded transmutations of a higher Reality. The notion of microcosm doctrine of signatures and esoteric relationship between things are the main surrogates of the doctrine of symbolism in Hindu philosophical and religious tradition. Some things are more intimately linked on the phenomenal plane because of similarity in origin or appearance or because they are related by association, tradition or mystical ties and theses occult affinities constitute the basis of a complex of symbolism of profuse variety of forms in Hindu and Buddhist mythology, ritual, art, architecture, literature and religion.

The symbols enable us to get into contact with, not only the pre-verbal levels of human experience, but symbols are the final destination also of the verbal experience and, eventually, symbols alone remain the tools with which we may handle the ultimate results of our verbal experience and activity. Says Prof. Eddington in his *Science and the Unseen World* :

That environment of Space and Time and Matter, of light and colour and concrete things, which seems so vividly real to us is probed deeply by every device of Physical Science, and at the bottom we reach symbols. Its substance has melted into shadows. Nonetheless, it remains a real world if there is a background to the

symbols - an unknown quantity which the mathematical symbols stands for. We think we are not wholly cut off from the background. It is to this background that our personality and consciousness belong.

It is clear, therefore, that without the aid of symbols neither understanding nor practice of higher religion is possible.

A 'symbol', however, must be distinguished from a 'sign'. A 'sign' stands for the vehicle of meaning and all that semioticians understand by that concept; and it applies to the natural level of discourse involving literal and moral modes of ratiocination. 'Symbols', on the other hand, stands for the method and value of signification employed on the non-natural levels, such as the allegorical.

This dichotomy between the 'sign' and the 'symbol' is well recognised :

The concept of 'symbol' should be strictly differentiated from that of a mere 'sign'. *Symbolic* and *semiotic* interpretations are entirely different things...Every view which interprets the symbolic expression as the best possible formulation of a relatively unknown thing which cannot conceivably, therefore, be more clearly or characteristically represented is symbolicThe explanation of the Cross as a symbol of Divine Love is semiotic, since Divine Love describes the fact to be expressed better and more aptly than a Cross, which can have many other meanings. Whereas that interpretation of the Cross is symbolic which puts it beyond all imaginable explanation, regarding it as an expression of an unknown and as yet incomprehensible fact of a mystical or transcendental i.e. psychological character, which simply finds its most striking and appropriate representation in the Cross.²

A 'symbol' is not consciously constructed; it is the best intelligible representation of interior and unconscious contents or inspirations from the Beyond, from the supramundane and supramental spheres which, at the time of the symbol-production, cannot be grasped in any other way.

² Carl Jung, *Psychological Types*, pp. 601-602.

True symbols have something illimitable about them. They are inexhaustible in their instructive and suggestive powers...

These symbols, it is argued, cannot be reduced to a systematic interpretation, for, the inter-cultural meaning and significance of these symbols is constantly changing. These symbols also possess the ability to alter and augment personalities, for images and symbols of myth and art possess some kind of transforming power'. The moment we systematise them through proper interpretations:

we deprive ourselves of the quickening contact, the demoniac and inspiring assault, that is the effect of their intrinsic virtue.³

The Primary function of a 'symbol' is not to inform or instruct but to liberate and inspire, because a symbol always and essentially, aims beyond itself; it points outside itself to the Ultimate and in doing so, carries the worshipper along. All that is expressible by 'symbols' is secondary; they are no more than mere tracks. What is important is to reach the ultimate Substance by means of these tracks and symbols.⁴

'Symbols' possess "the property of being more in intention than they are in existence."⁵

Lastly, a 'symbol' must be distinguished from an 'associative stimulus'. Such a stimulus merely acts on the observer by the propulsion of psychic association and it is not taken by him to stand for anything in its own right. It, therefore, cannot have the status of a 'symbol'.

A moth-eaten rag on a worm-eaten pole,
It does not look likely to stir a man's soul,
'T is the deeds that were done neath the moth-eaten rag,
When the pole was a staff and the rag was a flag.

To ask for an explanation of the meanings of the Sikh symbols, the Five K's, is, therefore, to put a wrong question. All that can legitimately be asked for, is an indication of clues, a pointing towards the

³ Heinrich Zimmer, *The King and the Corpse*, 1948, p. 1.

⁴ D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, 1955, p. 135.

⁵ *Ibid*

tracks that may help an individual to get into empathy with a particular symbol so as to render the symbol instinct with its demoniac power for the individual concerned.

Such clues are briefly given in respect of these Sikh symbols.

Now, what are the evocative meanings of the symbol *kirpān*? One meaning of the *kirpān* has already been referred to as a weapon, which cuts at the very roots of *avidyā*, nescience, that separates the transient, puny, individual self from the abiding, immortal, Universal Self. The *kirpān*, therefore, is symbolic of the Transcendental Knowledge, the *brahmajnana*, which destroys the illusion of the temporalia, the world of Time and Space, and leads to the Life everlasting. It is symbolic of the Guru Himself who is the Destroyer of Ignorance; it is nothing less than an Attribute of God to which a reference is made in the Muslim Sufi literature, as, *alhādī*. The Sikh Gurus declare this to be a primary Attribute of God the Light, the Destroyer of Darkness, of which the symbol is the clean cutting double-edged sword "which was created in the beginning, before the world of appearances was created."⁶ Secondly, a sword differs from a dagger, not so much in size or shape, for there are long daggers and short swords, but in the intended use. A sword is associated with open combat, governed by ethical principles, while the dagger is associated with secret attack, or sudden defence opposed to it. The second clue-meaning of this symbol, therefore, is that the Sikh way of life is wholly governed by ethical principles, and it constitutes an intelligent, aggressive and useful citizenship of the world and not a slavish, conformist and self-centred social existence.⁷ Thirdly, it is, by ancient tradition and association, a typical weapon of offence and defence and, hence, a fundamental right of the free man, a sovereign individual to wear it. All governments and rulers, whether ancient or modern, have insisted and do insist on their right to control and curtail the right of a citizen to wear

* ਖੰਡਾ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੇ ਸਾਜਕੈ ਜਿਨ ਸਭ ਸੈਸਾਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ॥

Var Sri Bhagauti, DG, p. 119.

⁷ (a) ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸੋ ਜੋ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਤ ਜੰਗ॥

Sarab Loh Granth, repeated also in Rahitnāmas.

(b) ਧੰਨ ਜੀਓ ਤਿਹਕੋ ਜਗ ਮੇ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਚਿਤ ਮੇ ਜੁਧੁ ਬਿਚਾਰੈ॥

Kṛsnavatār, DG, p. 570.

arms.⁸ Indeed, in final analysis, a government or the State is sustained and supported by organised power and the exclusive right of possession of arms, a citizen's right to wear arms being conceded as only of a permissive and licensed character. It follows from this that the measure of freedom to possess and wear arms by an individual is the precise measure of his freedom and sovereignty. Since a member of the Khalsa Brotherhood is pledged not to accept any alien restrictions on his civic freedom, he is enjoined to insist on and struggle for his unrestricted right to wear and possess arms of offence and defence. This is the third meaning of the symbol of *kirpān*, which, contrary to the current belief in certain quarters, need not, on every occasion, assume the form of an actual long sword, but may also be a small steel miniature of the sword, kept tied to the comb tucked up in the *chūdā* of the head-hair. That is not to say that any alien authority or fiat may limit the possession of this symbols to this form, but that the symbol may be, when desired, kept in this form, is not in doubt. The ancient usage, going back to Guru Gobind Singh himself, sanctions it. It is by all accounts agreed that when the cremation pile of Guru Gobind Singh's mortal body was probed into against his final instuction's a miniature *kirpān* was the only relic found in the ashes.

This Sikh symbol of *kirpān* has created a general impression that arm-bearing and soldiering is the essence of Sikhism and its core-meaning, and that peace and ahimsā, non-violence, are rejected by Sikhism as a way of life.

This is a misleading notion, though it must be conceded that the symbol of *kirpān*, does, by direct implication, reject uninterrupted peace as a natural or conceivable state of human existence, and it repudiates *ahimsā* as a literally absolute way of life, as it does not accept non-violence as a practical solution or universal solvent of social and political conflicts.

Let us consider the Sikh view of war and violence.

In the ancient *Arthaśāstra* war is mentioned as the resort of a king after peaceful methods of diplomacy—*sama*, mutual non-interference, *dāma*, economic aid sans visible strings, and *bheda*, creating

⁸ "The Hindus were prohibited (by Emperor Aurangzīb) from wearing arms." - —Musta'idd Khān, *Mā asīr-i-Alamgīr* (Persian), pp. 262-263.

dimensions in others' ranks—have failed. Guru Gobind Singh in his letter, *Zafarnāmeḥ*, to emperor Aurangzib (1706), declared recourse to violence and war as 'the last resort of a reasonable man for settling sonflicts' :

Chu kār az hameḥ hilate darguzasht
*Halāl ast burdan b-śamshir dast*⁹

though, thereby, he did not necessarily disapprove of the three steps of ancient Hindu diplomacy, *sāma*, *dāma*, *bheda* hinted to, here, in all other methods', *hameḥ hilate*. In the *Bhagavadgītā*, the cream of Hindu thought, however, war is deemed not as a means but as an end in itself, the pride, duty and glory of kshatriya, the ruling caste. In fact, any gain sought through war is considered as vitiatory of this merit. The soldier is not to concern himself with the result of the battle, but only as to how he conducts himself on the battlefield. Not that war has not its rewards, but the lure of rewards must never be the motivation of a true and high-minded soldier. These rewards may, however, be mentioned for purposes of stirring the dull imagination of an uncultured kshatriya, as it is done in the *Bhagavadgītā* :

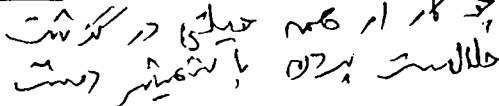
If you get killed on the battle-field
 you will enter paradise.

If you are victorious, the earthly
 glories are yours.

Considering thus, O Arjuna, the son of
 mother Kunti, girdle up your waist
 preparatory to enter the battlefield.¹⁰

This became the Rajput ideal in centuries to come, but which was never accepted as the Sikh soldier's ideal.

The present-day argument against war is that continued tension and a series of crises will sooner or later produce war, that all wars are now likely to turn into nuclear wars, and that nuclear wars, being

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Zafarnāmeḥ, 22.1.

¹⁰ हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।

तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय ! युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥

Bhagavadgītā, II 37.

mutually destructive to the point of annihilation, cannot be sanely considered as instruments of national policy. An implicit postulate of this argument is that surrender is preferable to annihilation, despite the deep moral roots that underline the moral division of the contemporary political world.

The implications of the Sikh symbol of *kirpān* are irreconcilably hostile to such an argument and position. Sikhism preaches preference of physical annihilation to basic moral compromises and apostasy from spiritual integrity :

When the alternative is good or evil, with choice between life and death,

I choose death in fight with evil.¹¹

is a declaration of Guru Gobind Singh.

Gāndhian argument against war is that it is an embodiment of violence; and violence, *hiṃsā*, being *per se* evil and morally wrong annihilation in peaceful protest, *satyagraha*, is preferable to this moral wrong.

Sikhism would regard this position as basically futile and illconceived. Sikhism concedes the doctrine of Thrasymachus (Plato : *Republic*, III) that successful violence, if it is violent enough, does pay and may win for its practitioners all the powers and glories of the world, and, further, that successful violence can always clothe itself in the trappings of morality. Such a violence must be resisted, Sikhism teaches, at all levels and at all costs and a surrender to such a violence amounts to an abetment of the evil of violence and not, as the Gāndhian would say, avoidance of the evil of violence.

The Biblical position with regard to the sword and violence is well-known : 'Those who live by the sword shall perish by the sword.' It is this insight in the *Sermon on the Mount* : 'The meek shall inherit the earth'.

The Sikh understanding of the laws of survival and death does not accept this position. The Sikh insight is that 'those who surrender rather than resist, shall perish' :

¹¹ ਜਬ ਆਵ ਕੀ ਅਉਧ ਨਿਦਾਨ ਬਨੈ ਅਤ ਹੀ ਰਨ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਜੂਝ ਮਰੇ॥

Markande Purān Chāṇḍī Chritra, DG, p. 99.

They who would loosen their grip on the hilt of the sword, may have to receive the sharp edge of the sword on their soft boneless necks.¹²

Again,

An unarmed person and a shorn slave are no better than a brainless, gutless sheep liable to be led to the slaughter-house by the first person who chooses to hold it by its ears.¹³

Also, world-peace is to be distinguished from the absolute infinite concept of universal peace and goodwill of which some fanatics and fantasists dream. World peace is a peace not based on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual evolution of human institutions. Practical peace is a process, a way of solving problems. It does not require that each man love his neighbour but that they live together in mutual tolerance submitting their disputes to a just and peaceful settlement. Such a peace cannot rule out, nay, it postulates the basic role of *kirpān* to maintain it. This distinguishes Gāndhian *ahimsā* from Sikhism.

In the context of the evocative meaning of *kirpān* as a Sikh symbol, the Sikh doctrine on the subject of war and violence, approximate though, is, by no means, identical with the ancient Hindu wisdom preserved in the *Mahābhārata*

Non-violence is the whole truth of Religion but benevolent violence is also equally valid. I tell you solemnly, this is the principle that the wardens of Dharma, Justice, follow.¹⁴

The metaphysical meaning of the symbol, *kirpān* as explained by Guru Gobind Singh himself, is available to us in a poetic composition of untranslatable diction and inimitable beauty :

The Destroyer of the cobwebs of Nescience,

¹² ਖੜਗ ਰਾਬ ਜਿਨਿ ਤਜਗੁ ਖੜਗ ਧਾਰਾ ਸਰੇ॥

Chritropakhyaṇ no. 297, DG, p. 1247.

¹³ ਬਿਨਾ ਸਸਤ੍ਰ ਕੇਸੇ ਨਹੁ ਭੇਡ ਜਾਨਉ, ਕਿਥੇ ਕਾਨ ਤੇ ਕੇ ਪਕੜ ਲੇ ਸਿਧਾਨੇ।

Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas, Patshahu* 10, XXIII, 15.21.

¹⁴ अहिंसा सकलो धर्मः हिंसा धर्मस्तथा हि ततः

सत्यं तेऽह प्रवक्ष्यामि यो धर्मो सत्यवादीनाम्।

Śantiparva , *Mahabharata*, 278.20.

Decimator of the hosts of Evil,
 Hero of the Armageddon,
 The Mighty one !
 Of invincible might,
 The Nova of blinding Light,
 Invested with solar Effulgence,
 The Refuge of the good and the godly,
 The Dispeller of Misknowing,
 Expiator of the Original Sin,
 Of that pure steel Sword I seek protection.
 Hail, hail to Thee, the ultimate Cause of Creation !
 Hail, hail to Thee, the Sustainer and Protector
 of the Universes.
 Hail to Thee, my helper and support.
 Glory be to the Sword !
 Hail to the sharp-edged Emblem of
 Justice, Authority and Power¹⁵.

The possession of a comb in the head-hair has been made obligatory to forbid keeping the hair in a matted condition, a practice of Indian ascetics and certain monastic orders. Shiva, the Lord of the *yogis yogeśwra*, residing away from the busy activity of the world, on the inaccessible peaks of the Kailāś mountain, is always represented with a pyramid of matted hair on his head. A Sikh must not renounce the world and must pursue his religious discipline to the last, as an active and useful citizen.

A Sikh by renouncing the world comes to no good. He who lives amidst the perils of a worldly life, yet attuned to God, shall reap much reward. Live by an honest occupation for, the only Giver is the God. Trust the beginning and the end, both to God and remain

¹⁵ ਖੋਗ ਖੰਡ ਬਿਹੰਡ ਖਲ ਦਲ ਖੰਡ ਅਤਿ ਰਣ ਮੰਡ ਬਰਬੰਡ॥
 ਭੁਜ ਦੰਡ ਅਖੰਡ ਤੇਜ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡ ਜੋਤਿ ਅਮੰਡੈ ਭਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਭੰ॥
 ਸੁਖ ਸੰਤਾ ਕਰਣੰ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਤਰਣੰ ਕਿਲਬਿਖ ਹਰਣੰ ਅਸ ਸਰਣੰ॥
 ਜੈ ਜੈ ਜਗ ਕਾਰਣ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟ ਉਬਾਰਣ ਮਮ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਰਣ ਜੈ ਤੇਗੰ॥

Bachitrnātak, DG, p. 39.

untarnished by the lures of the world. This is the teaching of the Guru¹⁶.

A Sikh must participate in the passions and action of life.

The iron bangle on the right wrist, is the *Dhammacakka* of Buddhist symbolism and the wheel *chakra*, the Hindu symbol of the Universal monarch *chakravartī*. To pursue religion and to help other pursue it, is the core-meaning of the *Dhammachakka*, (Sanskrit, *Dhamachakra*) and similarly, it is the paramount duty of a *chakravartin* monarch to perform his secular duties of running the government, diligently and conscientiously.¹⁷ A Sikh must ever remain mindful of his double role of a spiritual aspirant and a useful citizen. No default in one side or the other of this discipline is permissible. This is one meaning of the iron bangle of a Sikh. A circle, a *chakra*, is a perfect figure, all-inclusive in its circumference and without a beginning, without an end, in its structure. Symbols like the circle, the disc and cube, Carl Jung explains, have been considered symbols of wholeness, perfect divinity. So must a Sikh aim to be God-centred, with the whole creation as the objective of his compassion and activities. This is the second meaning of the iron bangle. Since it is, par excellence, symbolic of the Dharma, the Supreme Law, it is symbolic of faith¹⁸, without which, religious life is inconceivable. "The potency of Faith is beyond the description power of words."¹⁹

¹⁶ ਜੋ ਕੋਈ ਸਿਖ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ, ਉਸਕਾ ਬੁਰਾ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ॥
ਜੋ ਸਿਖ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਸਤਿ ਵਿਚ ਅਰਾਧੇਗਾ ਪ੍ਰਮੇਸਰ ਸੁਖੀ ਰਖੇਗਾ॥
ਧਰਮ ਕੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਣੀ। ਦੇਵਟਹਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਬਾ ਹੈ। . . .
ਦੋਵੇ ਸਿਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਸਭਿਪਣੇ। ਅਲਿਪਤੁ ਰਹਿਣਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਆਖਣਾ ਹੈ॥

Sakhī Gurū Amar Dās Ji Kī.

¹⁷ "As the eldest son, Sriputta, of a *Chakravartin* monarch rightly keeps arolling the wheel rolled by his father (i.e. the wheel of government) so do you, Sriputta, rightly keep arolling the incomparable wheel of Dharma set rolling by me." *Samyutta nikāya*, I. 191.

¹⁸ "Whosoever hath doubts here, Dhotaka.
Not him I come to liberate :
When Dhamma thou dost know supreme
Then mayest thou cross the flood."

--Suttanipata : 1064.

Hare, E.W. *Woven Cadences*, London.

¹⁹ ਮੰਨੇ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਕਰੀ ਨ ਜਾਇ॥

Japu, *GGs*, p. 3.

The third meaning of the iron bangle, therefore, is faith. A Sikh must lead a life, guided and supported by faith in God. Again, iron, the world over, is commonly taboo to evil spirits and prevents spells from taking effect. A Sikh remains well-protected against inharmonious influences on his life by virtue of holding fast to God and the Dharma. This is the fourth meaning of the iron bangle that a Singh wears. Lastly, in Hindu mythology of *Viṣṇavaism*, the *chakra* symbolises the Will of the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, to evolve and maintain the Universe, *ekoahm bahu syām iti saṅkalpah*.²⁰

In the Sikh symbology, therefore, the iron bangle represents a view of life that is positive and world-affirming, that cooperates with and aids the evolutionary impulse and purpose of the universe and does not seek, as the main concern of religion, ultimate annulment of human personality and final annihilation of the phenomenal world, as a Jain and Buddhist systems, in particular, do. These are the five symbolic meanings, among others, of the iron bangle.

The fifth symbol which a member of the Order of the Khalsa is enjoined to wear is a short drawer, a bottom garment, to cover the genital organs and the things upto the knees. This drawer consists of tailored cloth, and is called, *kacchā* or a *kacchehrā*.

The injunction to wear this tailored garment has three, among others, most profound and far-reaching symbolic meanings. To begin with, it is the badge and basis of civilisation itself. The word "civilisation" is an obvious derivative of the Latin, *civis*, a citizen, pertaining to a citizen. Etymologically, 'civilisation' means that which has to do with the entire progress of human race, since man attained sufficient intelligence and social unity to develop a system of organised living with an authority to enforce the rules of this organisation, that is, a system of government. Stages of the development of this 'civilisation' are classified by ethnologists as results of accumulated changes that found their initial impulses in half a dozen, or so, of practical inventions, such as speech, fire, bow and arrow, pottery, domestic animals, iron and writing. No doubt, ascent to civilisation from utter savagery, is indicated by these crucial developments in the

²⁰ एकोऽहं बहु स्याम्—इति संकल्पः

economy of human society. It is this approach towards a scientific understanding of the progress of civilization that has given rise to the highly complex and daring theory of Dialectical Materialism of Marx, which theory has led to some of the most astounding political and social developments in human history, such as the establishment of communist dictatorial regimes over vast areas of the globe, in recent times. But the basic impulse of civilization is represented by the strictly etymological significance of the word, that is, a self-consciousness on the part of the human individual that he is a member of a group of fellow humans, which group is organised on the recognition and acceptance of mutual 'duties'. A 'duty' implies self-control, and the covering of genital organs is the fruit of Wisdom, this is the first act they performed. This act, *par excellence*, distinguishes animal herds and savage humans from civilized human groups, and it is, therefore, the badge and basis of civilization; it marks the beginning of the metamorphosis that separates the pretrilobytic mammal, partially arboreal in habit, living on uncooked fruits and vegetables and possessed of no arts and crafts whatever, from the human beings of a civilised society, which is the other pole of this metamorphosis, a human being of a large brain, living in elaborately constructed houses, surrounded by diverse luxuries procured through the aid of multitude of handicrafts and machines, associated with his fellows under the control of highly organised governments, and satisfying his aesthetic needs through pictorial, plastic and literary arts of a high order. Of all this amazing transformation, the basic impulse finds its expression in the peculiar and significant use of fig-leaves which Adam and Eve first made on achieving social awareness of each other, when the concept of 'duty' took shape in their primitive minds. A Sikh, wearing a *kacchā*, must remain mindful of this basic impulse, which is the matrix of ethics and civilisation, both, and conduct himself as a member of the society accordingly, realising that he is a responsible carrier of the mission of civilisation, which is no less the product of performance of duties than of reflective and inventive genius, the cause of both of which he must consciously strive to further.

The second symbolic meaning of the *kacchā* is co-related to the Indian doctrine of Asceticism, which is the product of the Metaphysics

of the Jains originally, but has permeated the whole gamut of the Indian religious thought. According to this non-Vedic, Sāṅkhya system of philosophy, the nature of Man and the Universe is dualistic, with the subtle life-monad, *jīva*, and the gross karmic matter, *ājīva*, as the two constituents. The admixture of these two results in the defilement, *leśa* of the life-monad, and the *summum bonum* to be achieved is to free this life-monad from the defilement of the karmic matter, so that it achieves independence, *mukti*, and loneliness, *kaivalya*. This desirable end is to be achieved through 'fire' that is, asceticism, *tapas*, which consists in the drastic modification of all human impulses and life-forces, active within man, till the very life-process is completely arrested, resulting in extinction of the personality and decay of flesh, destroying totally all human values. Such are the Buddhas and *tirthankaras*, whose last vestiges of human personality have been consumed, through transcendental wisdom in the case of the former, and through 'fire' burning up, *tapas*, in the case of the latter. Incidentally, the concept and doctrine of *tapas*, though it might be pre-Aryan in origination, is certainly not non-vedic, for, it is mentioned in *Rgveda* (X.136 and X.190). A necessary ingredient of this earlier and ancient *tapas* is, living in nudity, in sky-clad, *digambara*, state.²¹ These sky-clad ascetics, from times immemorial, have been roaming in the extensive forests of India. The Greeks, at the time of Alexander's raid (327-26 B.C.) across Indus, noticed them and have described them as, 'gymnosophists', which means, naked philosophers, an exact translation of the word, *digambara*. They were gradually and effectively suppressed only by the unsympathetic totalitarian Muslims in the centuries following the twelfth century of the Christian era. This *digambara* tradition is a complete and final repudiation of all social and human values, aiming at their destruction as a preliminary step towards the achievement of the *summum bonum*. The Sikh religion, on the other hand, postulates social organisation as the necessary context in which the Sikh way of life must be practised. It conceives of the *summum bonum* as gradual enrichment and enlargement of human personality through a systematic cultivation of human

²¹ "The Law taught by Vardhamāna, forbids clothes."

Uttaradhayyanasūtra, 23, 24.

values. It, therefore, rightly repudiates this ascetic ideal based on the Sāṅkhya system of which *digrambara* nudity is the primary characteristic. The wearing of the *kacchā* is indicative of this repudiation. This is the second meaning of the injunction to wear a *kacchā*.

The third meaning of this *kacchā* symbol is to be traced to certain fundamental concepts of the teachings of the Vedas and Brahmanism. The Vedas embrace a body of writings the origin of which is ascribed to divine revelation, *śruti*, and which forms the foundation of the Brahmanical system of religious beliefs. This sacred canon is divided into four coordinate collections, *samhitās*, the four Vedas. These collections consist of poetical texts of devotional nature, called mantras. They have also attached to them certain theological prose works, called *Brāhmaṇas*. The chief works of this class are of an exegetic nature purporting to supply a dogmatic exposition of the sacrificial ceremonial practices laid down in the Vedas and to explain the mystic import of the different sacrifices and the mantras, mentioned and recorded in the Vedas. Two other classes of treatises are also appended to these Vedas, called *Āraṇyakas* and Upanisads. The former resemble the *Brāhmaṇas* in the subject matter, while the latter are of a speculative nature, mainly dealing with Depth-psychology as forming the basis of cosmology and Metaphysics. The religious theories mentioned in these ancient texts find their practical expression, chiefly, in sacrificial performances, the *yajna*. The practice of Vedic religion means, in fact, the performance of prescribed sacrifices as laid down in these texts. A correct interpretation of these Vedic texts, therefore, is of supreme importance, and the literature which seeks to make and preserve this interpretation is called, *Vedāṅga*, that is, the 'limbs of the Vedas'. One of these *Vedāṅgas*, which are six in number, is the *Kalpa*, which deals with the ceremonial part of the Brahmanic religion. *Kalpa* manuals are of two kinds (1) the *Śrautasūtras* which are based on revelation and teach the performance of the great sacrifices *mahāyajna*, requiring three fires, and (2) the *Smārtasūtras* which are based on tradition. The latter class again includes two kinds of treatises, (1) the *Gṛhyasūtras* and (2) the *Dharmasūtras*. The former treat of ordinary family rites, such as marriage, birth, name-giving, etc. connected with simple offerings in the domestic fire; the latter

treat of customs and temporal duties. The performance of sacrifices explained in these texts, publicly or domestically, as required, is obligatory on all those who follow Brahmanism or Vedic religion; and non-compliance entails severest possible consequences, both on the temporal as well as the spiritual plane. He who performs these sacrifices properly and consistently has fulfilled all the duties that the society or the gods require of him. He may legitimately expect prosperity here and felicity after death. These sacrifices require complicated rituals and the assistance of a hereditary priestly class, the Brahmins. According to the various *Kalpa* texts none of these sacrifices can be performed for and by a person, who has not previously undergone ceremonial purification, *śauca*, and is not clad in a single, untailored, unstitched garment, dhoti. There are various other prerequisites also, but this single unstitched garment is the basic minimum. This is the origin of the graceful *sārhi*, the perfect masterpiece of six yards long unstitched clothing, of which the Indian women make such skilful and charming use to drape themselves cunningly so as to reveal the outlines of the hips and to emphasize the narrowed waist and the swell of the breasts, and this is the origin of dhoti, which the male Hindu so comfortably employs as the nether, and, sometimes, the only garment of his tropical wardrobe.

It was this dhoti, the characteristic Hindu dress, which so irritated and excited the imperial ire of the puritan Aurangzib that, according to the Imperial Chronicles, *Akhbārāt-i-Darbār-i-Mu'allā*, on the 29th April, 1682,

Syed Amjad, the Chief Censor, reported that Hindus went about dressed in dhoti. Ihtimām Khān, the Deputy Censor, was ordered to announce by the beat of drum that Hindus should wear pyjamas instead.

Discarding of *sārhi* or dhoti and wearing of a *kacchā* would, in practice, amount to abandonment of the rituals of the Vedic religion and the practices of Brahmanism. When Guru Gobind Singh called upon the neighbouring Hindu hill-chiefs to join the Order of the Khalsa, the only serious objection they raised was that they should be permitted the wearing of the dhoti, and the stitched and tailored

kacchā should not be prescribed in the discipline to be followed. But this was precisely the point. Guru Gobind Singh had declared these "mechanical Vedic and Brahmanic sacrifices as gross superstition," and had enjoined upon the Sikhs "to pursue, instead, ethical conduct inspired by love,"²² as the religious discipline on earth.

This, then, is the third clue-meaning of the symbolic use of the *kacchā* that the mechanical ceremonial ancestral system of religious practices of the Hindus is to be abandoned completely and without reservation, and the new way of life, based on ethical conduct in the social context, inspired by universal compassion and love, is to be adopted by the Sikhs.

Kacchā or the stitched genital covering article of dress is a purely indigenous and most ancient piece of Indian ward-robe known since Vedic times. The elementary *kacchā* remained for centuries the basic pattern of Indian dress long after more elaborate styles were introduced mostly under foreign influences during Persian, Greek and barbarian periods of Indian history. Pātanjali mentions *paṭa* for head-covering scarf or shawl and he also mentions the garment, *chandātaka*, or drawers and *sāmūlya* or undershirt, commonly known as banyan today. These are the most ancient and purely indigenous Indian garments.

This, then, is an additional and penumbral symbolic significance of *kacchā* as a Sikh religious symbol, pure, indigenous, not mechanically borrowed or adopted : such is the true character of Sikhism and the Sikh doctrines.

In conclusion, the question arises in the mind as to how, why these Sikh religious symbols emerged or re-emerged from most ancient roots of symbology and myths of mankind, as and when they did, as a corollary of the epiphany of Sikhism and in the configuration of *gestalt* as ordained by Guru Gobind Singh ?

There is no clear answer to this question except the following :

He who marvels that a formal symbol can remain alive not only for millenia, but that it can spring to life again after an interruption of

²² ਕੇਵਲ ਕਰਮ ਭਰਮ ਸੇ ਚੀਨਹੁ ਧਰਮ ਕਰਮ ਅਨੁਰਾਗੇ॥

Ramkali, Patshau 10, DG p. 710.

thousands of years, should remind himself that the power from the spiritual world, which forms one part of the symbol, is eternal...It is the spiritual power that knows and wills and manifests itself when and where its due time comes.²³

Again,

As every living thing, so the symbols have their periods of waxing and waning. When their power has reached its zenith, they descend into the paths of daily life until they become conventional expressions which have no more connection with the original experience or which have become either too narrow or too general in meaning so that their depth is lost. When this happens, then other symbols take their place, while they retire into the inner circle of initiates from where they will be reborn when their time has come.²⁴

²³ Walter Andrae, *Die Ionische Saule, Bauform Oder Symbol?* (1933, Schlusswort) as quoted by Ananda Kumarswamy in a f.n. at p. 169 of Heinrich Zimmer's *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*.

²⁴ Lama Anagrika Govinda, *Foundations of the Tibetan Mysticism*, p. 25.

CHAPTER VI

THE ARCHETYPAL FORM OF GURU GOBIND SINGH

In Chapter II, a reference has been made to the archetypal Form of Guru Gobind Singh with a description thereof. That there is an archetypal form as different and distinct from physical form, is an idea which is instinctively grasped by a Hindu brought up in the old cultural tradition of his hoary religion. He knows that pictures in houses, shops and street temples representing Rāma, Kṛṣṇa are Viṣṇu's various physical forms. He has no difficulty in comprehending the archetypal form of Viṣṇu, a blue handsome figure of Man, with four arms, reclining on the cushy bed of the coils of a hydra-headed snake, floating on a dark blue ocean, with beautiful Lakṣmi massaging his left foot, never having appeared in History in this identical physical form, for, he readily understands that Viṣṇu is an immortal god, and a denizen of a plane of existence which is *vaikuṇṭha*, *rūpāloka*, where 'form' and 'space' are, but time is not, or where Time stands still, so to speak, and that, when it 'descends' (*avataraṇa*) into the mortal world, *mṛtyuloka* of physical forms (where Time holds supreme sway), it is but an imperfect and different reflection of the archetypal form. Similarly, a Buddhist, nurtured in the traditions of his religion and theology, would readily grasp the difference between a *dhyāni Buddha*, and a *mānuṣī* Buddha, such as Gautama, the Buddha, of the Sākya clan was. But the present generation in India finds these concepts as obscure, if not altogether imaginary and worthless; such has been the divorce between the past tradition and the new education of the last hundred years or so.

This is not to be blamed on the European system of education as such, for the doctrine of the Ideas of Plato has been known to Europe for the last two millennia, and the concept of archetypal forms is a

cognate concept. Let us start with these European beginnings of the concept. What is an Idea of which Plato so poetically speaks in his Dialogues, especially the *Republic*. When defining the excellence of a horse, he speaks of its "horsiness", meaning thereby the perfect purpose and ideal towards which all horses may develop. When confronted by the difficulty of his students who bemoans that while he can see a horse, he cannot see "horsiness", Plato rightly rejoins that it is, because while he, the student, has eyes, he has no mind. A horse is seen with the senses, while the ideal "horsiness" is comprehended by the intellect, a function of the human mind. Similarly, the Idea of a thing may be the 'general idea' of the class to which that thing belongs. 'A horse' is an instance of "the Horse", which is no particular horse, but is readily perceived by the mind. This 'general idea' is a matter of perception, and not of any particular sensation of sensibilia. Lastly, it might be the law or the laws according to which a thing operates, that is, the natural laws under which it functions. In the "Idea" of Plato, all these three concepts are fused into one. These Ideas lie behind the phenomena which greet our senses as particular objects and physical forms. These latter are subject to the sway of time, and, therefore, are transient and impermanent, while the former are not so subject, and they therefore, endure and are more 'real'.

The profound Buddhist doctrine of *Tṛkāya*, takes its cue from the nature of the mental processes of man, a method of enquiry already perfected in the *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* (*mantram* 3) and conceives of Reality in three layers and aspects deducible from the unconscious, subconscious and conscious layers of the individual mind. The unconscious layer of the human mind is universal and formless but it is the Ground of all the minds and is their ultimate Matrix. It knows of no limits, no forms, no temporalia, and no attributes, and yet without it nothing could exist. This is the Absolute of the philosophers, the *Pārabrahma* of the Hindu Vedantist, and the *Ādi Buddha* of the Mahāyānists. In the Sikh scripture, It is referred to as a 'Person', organised around a will and intellect of Its own. This is, however, the primordial, pre-creation, neutral Stuff. The process of creation begins with reflexes of this Stuff assuming pure forms which exist in the Realm of Space, unsoiled by the pulsations of time. These are the

Ideas of Plato. This is the sub-conscious strata of human mind which expresses itself on the conscious level through symbols of particular ideas and images. This is the *rūpāloka* of the Buddhists, and the *devāloka* of the Hindus. This is the Plane of existence where real, permanent forms or archetypes exist, which is the land of the *dhyāni Buddhas*, and the *Īśvaras* of Brahmanism. Just as the conscious thoughts and notions in the mind are merely particular symbols of general ideas and images in the subconscious stratum, similarly the phenomenal world is merely a kaleidoscopic shadow of this *rūpāloka* of permanent forms. This is why the phenomena and the temporalia is described as Maya and illusory. That is how a Buddha is spoken of as having three bodies, *trkāya*, the first, the *dharmakāya*, which is the essence of all the Buddhas, the *Bodhi* or true knowledge itself. This is the one permanent reality underlying all Phenomena and all individuals. The second is the *sambhogakāya*, the body of enjoyment, the radiant and super-human form, in which the Buddhas appear in their celestial splendour in the paradises, the *devāloka*s, or the worlds of 'the shining-ones'. These forms are archetypal forms of the Buddhas. The third is the *nirmānakāya*, the body of transformation, which a Buddha assumes, when he takes human birth.

In Buddhist and Hindu thought these archetypal forms are viewed not only as enduring and non-temporal but as eternal and timeless. Such are the Hindu gods, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Shiva, and such are the *dhyāni* Buddhas *Vairocana*, *Akṣobha*, *Ratnasambhava*, *Amitābha* and *Amaṅghasiddhi*. The Sikh Gurus, however, do not ascribe to these archetypal forms an eternal and timeless character.

The demiurge Brahma made entry into the

World of Forms within the context of Time-flux.

Likewise, Shiva entered the Plane of Forms.

The resplendent Viṣṇu too made appearance when Time began.

All this Spectacle is the creature of Time.¹

The forms are mutable and destructible according to the Will of God even within the time-cycle of the present Creation. As already

¹ ਕਾਲ ਪਾਇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਪੁ ਧਰਾ॥ ਕਾਲ ਪਾਇ ਸਿਵਨੁ ਅਵਤਾਰ॥

ਕਾਲ ਪਾਇ ਕਰਿ ਬਿਸਨ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸਾ॥ ਸਕਲ ਕਾਲ ਕਾ ਕੀਯਾ ਤਮਾਸਾ॥

Chritropakhyan, DG, pp. 1386-87.

stated the Sikh Gurus do not accept the naive and almost simplistic linear concept of Time postulated by the modern European mind, the dialectician and the Marxist. Guru Gobind Singh clearly envisages many Time-fluxes or Times, distinct and different from the one revealed to human beings through and superimposed as a category of sensation, by the mind, on account of which the world of phenomena appears as temporal and transient, progressing in a linear arrow-like movement. One Time-layer or stratum, is the plane of human mind, the *rūpāloka* or the *devāloka*. Nor does the Guru entertain the naive, arrow-like, linear view of Time as fundamental to the nature of Time. The riddle of Time is referred to as difficult and far from simple. Is it one-directional, uni-dimensional, having 'past', 'present' and 'future' as its successive phases? Or does it go backward, 'future', 'present', 'past', as Ouspensky suspects? Is Time arrow-less in which there can be movement forward and backward that enables clairvoyance by dwelling in which complex Time, some people can see 'future' in the 'present'? Or, is it multidimensional, in which lives of separate and distinct human individuals may be knit by cosmic laws of "group affinities"? Or, is Time "the movement that binds things together" as the classic statement of great Muslim philosopher al-Fārābi puts it? Or again, is Time just illusory, as mystical religions of the East believe it to be, all things being there already and the succession of events being just an illusion? These possibilities about the nature of Time are clearly hinted at in the writings of Guru Gobind Singh, such as have survived and come down to us. The Matrix and the Ground of all these Times or Time-strata, is God Himself and, therefore, He is *Mahākāl*,² the Great Time, the *kāl kāle*,³ 'the Time of Times', and God is Time.⁴ The archetypal forms, therefore, have many grades, but none of them are eternal, though they are enduring and abiding from the view-point of the human Time. The highest grades of these archetypal forms are

² ਤਹ ਹਮ ਅਧਿਕ ਤਪੱਸਿਆ ਸਾਧੀ॥ ਮਹਾਂਕਾਲ ਕਾਲਕਾ ਅਰਾਧੀ॥

Bachitranatak, DG, pp. 54-55.

³ ਨਮੋ ਕਾਲ ਕਾਲੇ॥

Jap, Ibid. p. 3.

⁴ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੀ ਰੱਛਾ ਹਮ ਨੈ॥

Akalustat, DG, p. 11.

the Ideas in the Universal Mind, *sāṅkalpa*, which is something analogous to the *Alayavijñāna* of Asang, the founder of the Yogācāra school of Mahāyān Buddhism. Guru Gobind Singh strictly forbade, in the severest language, that he must not be regarded as anything but "an humble slave of God, come down on earth to see what the world has to show,"

They who would regard me as a divinity shall fall into the grossest error;

I am but an humble slave of God,

Come down to earth to see what the world has to show.⁵

But he unambiguously states that he, in essence, is an archetypal Form in the Mind of God, conceived by God and transformed by Him into Guru Gobind Singh, "to found the order of the Khalsa, to aid the cause of Good and to thwart Evil."⁶

About these archetypal Forms, Carl Jung tells us that 'archetypes are instinctual images that are not intellectually invented. They are always there and they produce certain processes in the Unconscious Mind that one could best compare with myths'.⁷

When Guru Gobind Singh founded the Order of the Khalsa on March 30, 1699, in his mood, temper, habits and costumes he effected a complete and remarkable change. On this particular occasion and, henceforth, on all formal occasions, he made it a point to assume the

⁵ ਜੇ ਹਮ ਕੋ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਉਚਰਿ ਹੈ॥ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਨਰਕਿ ਕੁੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਪਰਿ ਹੈ॥

...
ਮੈ ਹੋ ਪਰਮ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੋ ਦਾਸਾ॥ ਦੇਖਨਿ ਆਯੋ ਜਗਤ ਤਮਾਸਾ॥

Bachitranatak, *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁶ ਇਹ ਬਿਧਿ ਕਰਤ ਤਪੱਸਿਆ ਭਯੋ॥ ਦ੍ਰੈ ਤੇ ਏਕ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਗਯੋ

...
ਚਿਤ ਨ ਭਯੋ ਹਮੇਰ ਆਵਨ ਕਹ॥ ਚੁਭੀ ਰਹੀ ਸ੍ਰਤ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਚਰਨਨ ਮਹਿ॥ . . . *Ibid.*
ਜਿਉ ਤਿਉ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਹਮਕੋ ਸਮਝਾਯੋ॥ ਇਮ ਕਹਿ ਕੈ ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਪਠਾਯੋ॥ *Ibid.* 55

...
ਮੈ ਅਪਨਾ ਸ੍ਰਤ ਤੋਹਿ ਨਿਵਾਜਾ॥ ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਬੇ ਕਹੁ ਸਾਜਾ॥
ਜਾਹਿ ਤਹਾ ਤੇ ਧਰਮੁ ਚਲਾਇ॥ ਕਬੁਧਿ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਲੋਕ ਹਟਾਇ॥

Ibid., p. 57.

⁷ Evans Richard I, *Conversations with Carl Jung and Reactions from Ernest Jones*.

form and aspect, closely approximating to his archetypal Form. One, Khushwaqt Rāi, an employee and news-writer of John Company at Fort William, wrote an account of the Sikhs in 1811, at the specific suggestion of Colonel David Ochterloney, in which he states that

from that day (March 30, 1699), he, Guru Gobind Singh, parted with marks of Brahmanism, and put on dark-blue clothes and pure-steel accoutrements, and assumed a strange aspect. He became fully armed, wore two swords, a dagger, iron battle-discus, pistol, bow and arrows and other arms made of pure steel. He tied his turban in a high cone of one hand altitude, and made this fashion his future practice. He replaced the customary official Muslim greetings, "Peace be with you" with, "Victory to God Almighty." Instead of the Muslim call to prayers, in the evenings and mornings, (the only forms of public worship then permissible by the law) he promulgated the shouts of *Akāl*, *Akāl*. He styled himself, as Guru Gobind Singh, the Khalsa.⁸

The description is not full, though broadly accurate, as far as it goes. An aigrette of bright dazzling jewels tied to the facade of the turban, a pure steel lance in the right hand, a white hawk perched on the left hand and a dark blue steed under the thighs, are the important details missing in this description. It was this identical form and aspect which he assumed, when, at his last moments on earth, he stately rode into the enclosure containing his cremation-pyre of sandal-wood.⁹

We might pause here to reflect on the Guru's change in his turban-style : "he tied his turban in a high cone of one hand altitude," and he

8

از آن روز ز نارسکت و لباس نیلگون اختیار کرد و زیور آهنی
گزدید - دو وضع غیر مقرر نمود - دوشمشیریه کمربست و کارد و چکمه
و طنبیه و کمان و غیره هر یک هله آهنی بر خود آویخت و دستار
بقدر یک دست دراز بسن عادت کرد و بعضی کلمه سلام فتح
و اهنگ و یوچی مقرر کرد - بجائے بانگ ضعیف دشام شد اکال اکال
به آواز بلند خواندن آغاز نمود -

—Khuswaqt Rai, *Tawārikh-i-Sikhān*.

⁹ *Gurpratāp Sūraj Granth*, (ed. Vir Singh), Vol. 14, pp. 6335-6336.

adopted this fashion as his "future practice." In the *Louvre*, Paris, there is an exhibit in the Assyro-Babylonian section, 'the Stels of Hammurabi', about four thousand years old (*circa* 2000 B.C.) on the top of which *stela* is engraved the scene depicting the God on High, god Shammas, dictating to King Hammurabi the Laws for the guidance of mankind to show eternal concern of divine powers to help and aid the mortals. In this scene, god Shammas, in contrast to that of Hammurabi, wears a conical high altitude turban exactly similar to the style that Guru Gobind Singh adopted on this occasion to proclaim his divine status as well as his fundamental concern for the welfare of mankind.

This is the archetypal Form of Guru Gobind Singh, of which the dark blue clothes, the pure steel arms, the lance, the white hawk, the jewel aigrette, and the dark blue horse are the most significant.

The dark blue clothes which Guru Gobind Singh put on when assuming his archetypal Form in his mortal aspect, a colour still popular with the *Nihang* group of the Sikhs, and worn, as an emblem, by the present day Akālī group of the Sikhs, is symbolic of Infinity and God, with reference to its pre-Creation character. The fathomless-shoreless sea, on a starless dark night, is the bed on which, Viṣṇu, the Primordial Man, *sanātanpuruṣa*, of Hindu mythology leisurely reclines. This cosmic Sea, the Endless Snake, *Anantnāga*, which also is the water-spirit, are symbolic of the pre-Creation primordial Stuff which is the Ground of the archetypal form, that is Viṣṇu. The human forms, which Viṣṇu assumes from Age to Age, are also of dark blue hue, the colour of the Cosmic Sea, and the infinite void, as the skies appear on a clear day. This train of thought goes back to the *Rgveda* itself, where, in a cosmogonic poem, the so-called, 'Hymn of Creation', the origin of the world, is explained as the evolution of the existent, *sat*, from the non-existent, *asat*. Imprimis Water, thus, came into being, from which Intelligence was evolved by heat.

There was not the non-existent, nor the existent then; there was not the air, nor the heaven which is beyond, What did it contain?

Where? In whose protection? Was there water, unfathomable profound?¹⁰

Guru Nānak similarly speaks of this pre-Creation Reality,

For an infinite span, for an unaccountable Time-lessness, the nebulous Nothing, broading, neither bodies nor spaces, but His Will alone, incomprehensible, limit-less.¹¹

It is this, in modern parlance, the God Absolute, of which dark blue colour is the symbol. When Guru Gobind Singh put on dark blue clothes on March 30, 1699, and on subsequent ceremonial occasions, he meant to indicate and affirm nothing less than that he, in his mortal form, was merely a transformation of the Divine Will in Its all-pervasive Cosmic aspect and that, "it was this Divine Will which was the Founder of the Order of the Khalsa."¹²

The blue clothes that the *Nihang* or Akālī soldiers put on, particularly on the occasion of a holy crusade and the yellow clothes which the Hindu Rajput warriors traditionally don when going into a victory or death battle, go back to hoary Hindu mythology of the human forms which the Cosmic Man, Viṣṇu, had assumed during the *Tretāyuga*, tertiary Cycle of Time of the current creation. Viṣṇu descended into earth as Kṛṣṇa of dark blue complexion *śyāmvarṇa*, whose story is told in the "*Harivaṁśa*" appendix of *Mahābhārata* and *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* and in the latter's Hindi version, *premsāgar* or 'Ocean of Love'. In the *Mahābhārata* Kṛṣṇa declares untruth to be more ancient than the truth and teaches that one may lie without scruple for one's life. Truth, he states, thrusts man into hell, if it hurts,¹³ wherefrom follows the wise dictum; *mā brūyāt satyamapriyam*, (मा ब्रूयात् सत्यमाप्रियम्) 'refrain from uttering the truth that hurts and harms.' Accordingly, during the Great

¹⁰ नासदासीत्रो सदासीत्तदानी नासदीजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।

किमावरीवः कुह कस्य शर्मत्रम्ः किमासीदगहनं गभीरम् ।।

Rgveda, X. 129.1.

¹¹ ਅਰਬਦ ਨਰਬਦ ਧੁੰਧੁਕਾਰਾ॥ ਧਰਟਿ ਨ ਗਗਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਅਪਾਰਾ॥

Marū Sohale, M 1, GGS, p. 1035.

¹² ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੈ ਚਲਾਯੋ ਪੰਥ॥ -ਸ੍ਰੀ ਮੁਖ ਵਾਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ੧੦, as reported by Gianu Giān Singh, in his *Sri Gurū Panth Prakash*, p. 353.

¹³ J.J. Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India*, II, p. 492.

Battle, he promoted the spread of the false rumour that Droṇā's son was dead, hearing which the great hero laid down his arms in grief and was instantly slain. When Karna's chariot got struck in the mud and he dismounted to dislodge it, Kṛṣṇa, against all rules of war, urged Arjuna to attack him and thus Karna was killed unresisting. It was Kṛṣṇa again who urged Bhīma to deliver the unfair blow which shattered Duryodhana's thigh. This Kṛṣṇa has *Pitāmbara*¹⁴ as one of his names, which means, 'yellow-clothes', yellow, the colour of spring and dalliance, of love and erotic sport, reminiscent of the golden hue, *hari*, of the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu's nordic hair.

Balrāma, the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa, in contrast, was of fair complexion and the Puraṇas describe him as a partial incarnation of Viṣṇu or of Śeṣa, the Cosmic Serpent. When Kṛṣṇa robbed Śatijit of the wonderful *sāmantakagem* Balrāma remonstrated with his younger brother for the latter's covetousness, 'worthy only of a low-born thief', whereupon Kṛṣṇa reluctantly surrendered the jewel. Unlike most of the heroes of ancient Indian legend Balrāma married only once, taking the beautiful Revati as his wife, thus upholding the Sikh ideal of celibacy, *ekā nārī jat hoe*, as Bhāi Gurdās puts it, the monogamous marriage. This furnishes an obvious contrast to the free loves and permissive sex of his younger brother 'the full incarnation of Viṣṇu', cent per cent divine, *solah kalā sampūrṇa*. (सोलह कला सम्पूर्ण) A great fighter, Balrāma taught Duryodhana and Bhīma the use of the mace and though he remained neutral in the Kurukshetra War, the foul blow delivered to Duryodhana by Bhīma so offended his sense of fair play that he seized his club to fight Bhīma and was only restrained by Kṛṣṇa. Amongst the many names of Balrāma, *Balbhadra*, (might-excelling), *Baladeva* (power-god) *Nilavastra* (blue-vestured), are most famous.

The blue clothes and the yellow clothes of Balrāma and Kṛṣṇa, respectively and of the soldierly uniforms of the death squads of the Akālīs and the Rajputs, signify also two systems of war-ethics and two codes of soldierly conduct. the one pertains to antinomian, *nirdharma*,

¹⁴ ਬਦਤਿ ਤਿਲੋਚਨੁ ਤੇ ਨਰ ਮੁਕਤਾ ਪੀਤੰਬਰੁ ਵਾ ਕੇ ਰਿਦੈ ਬਸੈ॥

Gujart, Tirlochan, GGS, p. 526.

gods and incarnations of gods, avatārs, and the other to high-minded, God-fearing, God-illuminated human beings whose commitment to Dharma and laws of Ethics is final and irrevocable.

Again, those outside the pale of society voluntarily adopt the orange-yellow garments that were originally the covering of condemned criminals led to the execution ground. The sannyasi puts on yellow robes to indicate that he is civilly dead and the Rajput knight dons yellow robes when going forth to a certain death in a battle against overwhelming odds for the same reason. This mode of thought, renouncing the world or renouncing all hope, is un-Sikh like.

It is certain that this aspect and significance of the blue vestments which the Guru took on, was also present in his mind.

The pure steel arms which he put on, are symbolic of sovereignty which is of Divine concession, and which, therefore, cannot be curtailed or abrogated by acts of mortals. "Pure steel" is an epithet which Guru Gobind Singh frequently applies to God Almighty¹⁵, owing, no doubt, to the invincibility of steel by other, lesser, metals. Arms and the unrestricted right to wear them, is a guarantee of freedom and sovereignty.¹⁶ When asked by Captain Murray, the British Charge-de-affairs at Ludhiana in about 1830, for the captain's gallant mind 'was then' wholly preoccupied with the Doctrine of Legitimacy, recently evolved or rediscovered by European statesmen at the Congress of Vienna, as to from what source the Sikhs derived the validity of their claim to earthly sovereignty, for the rights of treaty or lawful succession they had none; Bhāi Rattan Singh Bhangū, replied promptly.

The Sikhs' right to earthly sovereignty is based on the Will of God as authenticated by the Guru, and therefore, other inferior sanctions are unnecessary.¹⁸

¹⁵ ਸਰਬ ਲੋਹ ਦੀ ਰਛਿਆ ਹਮ ਨੇ॥

Akal Ustat, DG. p. 11.

ਮਹਾ ਲੋਹ ਮੈ ਕਿੰਕਰ ਬਾਰੇ॥

Kṛṣṇāvatār, DG, p. 310.

¹⁶ ਤਬ ਇਮ ਭਨਿਓ ਗਰੀਬ ਨਿਵਾਜ, ਸਸਤ੍ਰਨ ਕੇ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੈ ਰਾਜ॥

Gurpratāpsūrya (Anandpur Sodhi's MS).

¹⁸ ਧੁਰ ਦਰਗਾਹੋਂ ਹਮ ਲਈ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਪਾਹੀ॥

ਸਿੰਘ ਹੋਇ ਰਾਖੇ ਕਿਮ ਕਾਣ, ਐਰੇ ਗੈਰੇ ਕਾ ਸੰਗਹਿ ਫੁਰਮਾਣ॥

Rattan Singh Bhangu, *Prachin Panth Prakash*.

Of this right, the pure steel arms worn by Guru Gobind Singh in representing his archetypal Form, are a symbol.

What is the steel lance in the right hand of this archetypal Form?

About one fourth of the hymns of the *Rgveda* are invocations to god Indra—far more than are addressed to any other deity—and in the early, mutational, critical struggles of the Aryan race, it is Indra, who, both as a terrestrial god and as a human hero and leader, aids and leads the wandering race to victory over the dark foes of heaven as well as of earth. The name Indra, is definitely pre-Indian, for it occurs in the *Avestā* of the ancient Iranians as a *deva*, which, in Sanskrit, is a shining, friendly god, but in ancient Pehalvi of the *Avestā*, means a demon. Did the Iranian Aryans and the Indo-Aryans, quarrel and violently disagree on some critical issues before they separated to settle in different lands partitioned by the mountain range of The Hindukush? This Indra, the patron-god and human leader of the Indo-Aryans, is primarily a god of thunderbolt, *vajra*, who vanquishes the demons of drought and darkness to set free the life-giving waters, and to destroy the serpent of Darkness, *ahi*, so as to release from his dark coils, the life-sustaining Sun. The *Sāvitrī*¹⁹ hymns of the *Rgveda* describe Indra as such, in great detail.²⁰

In his physical transformation, as the human leader of the Aryan race, he is described as of golden, fair, *hari* complexion, with a fair golden beard and similar head and body hair. In his right hand he holds a *vajra*, a lance or a thunderbolt, which is fashioned for him by the god, Tvaṣṭr, made of iron, *ayasa*. *Vajrabāhu*,²¹ lance-armed *vajrin*, wielder of the lance, *vajrahastah*, holding a lance in his hand, are the exclusive epithets of Indra in *Rgveda*. Jupiter, the Roman god of gods, and the god of heavens, the same as the Zeus of the Greeks, is readily recalled to mind, as European Indra, of hoary extra-Indian origin, the

¹⁹ यः सूर्यय उषसं अजान यो अपा नेता स जनास इन्द्र ।।

Rgveda, II, 12.7.

²⁰ वज्रमेको विभर्ति हस्त

आहित तेन बुध्राणि जिघ्रते

Ibid., VIII 29.4.

²¹ यः सोमपा निचितो वज्रबाहुर्वा बज्रहस्त स जनास इन्द्र ।।

Ibid., II. 12.13.

anthropomorphic human god of the Aryan race, their protector, leader and friend in woe and weal. Unlike the other Greek and Roman gods, he is always represented in frieze and sculpture, with a full beard, a lance of thunderbolt in hand, and an eagle in the back-ground. He is the Cosmic Man, become anthropomorphic god of the Aryan race, the bestower of spiritual light and earthly victory, both.²²

But what is this eagle of Jupiter, of whom we never hear in connection with Indra in the *Rgveda*? *Soma*, the divine intoxicating beverage, is frequently mentioned in the *Rgveda* as a companion of Indra, riding in the same chariot as Indra. The *soma* is also called, *amrit*, in the *Rgveda*, meaning the draught of immortality. This *soma* was brought down from the heavens by the metre, *gāyatrī*, employed in the compositions of the *Rgveda*.²³ When *gāyatrī* brought this draught of immortality from the heavens, it assumed the form of an eagle.²⁴ It is this eagle, symbolic of the immortality-bestowing powers of this Aryan god, which is depicted in the background of the European Indra.

We shall presently refer to the white hawk perched on the left hand of the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh, but in the meantime, let us pursue this symbolism of the lance, the *vajra*, a little further.

That the *vajra* of Indra was fashioned out of steel, has been mentioned above. *Vajra* means, adamant, that which cannot be scratched or broken by any other substance. Thus, *vajra* also means, a diamond, the clearest and the hardest rock known. Ancient Indian Depth psychology recognises four mental states, the 'waking consciousness', the 'dream-state', the 'dreamless state' and the unnamable 'Fourth State', *chāturiya*.²⁵ The last state represents the God, and a skill

²² यस्मान्न ऋते विजयन्ते जनासो यं युध्यमाना अबसे हवन्ते

Ibid., II. 12.9.

²³ Nearly one fourth of the hymns of *Rgveda* are composed in the metre, *gāyatrī*, which consists of three octosyllabic verses, identical in construction, each of which normally ends with two iambs.

²⁴ *Rgveda* IV. 26, 27.

²⁵ ਜਾਗ੍ਰਤਿ ਸੁਪਨ ਸੁਖੋਪਤਿ ਤੁਰੀਆ, ਆਤਮ ਭੂਪਤ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਪੁਰੀਆ॥

—*Paintasakhari*.

to experience at will²⁶ that fourth stage, is to have *brahmajnāna*, or God-realisation. All the first three states of consciousness, the waking, the sleeping and the yogic trance are phenomenal, built-up, and therefore, dissolved again, for, "that which comes, goes,"²⁷ the first with its thinking and feeling, the second with its subtle apparitions, and the third with its quiescent mentation. The fourth, which is beyond name and form and, thus, nameless and called 'the Fourth' is, at once, the experience and essence of the Absolute, and it is *vajra*, adamant, undisintegrate and undissolvable by violence of a physical nature or by the power of the discursive, critical, analytical thought. This *vajra*, whether it is the steel lance of Indra, or an impressionistic thunder-wand in the hands of Jupiter, or a carved diamond stick of Buddhist iconography to designate the Man of Supreme Realisation, stands for the Highest Knowledge and Its possession. It is thus the appellation of a certain allegorical Buddha-type, called, *Vajra-dhāra*, 'he who wields the Adamantine substance or Weapon', *Vajra*, in short, is a symbol of the Absolute which sustains and engenders the Phenomenon. That the inner spiritual Enlightenment is identical with God, is a common truth of all higher religions.²⁸ The *vajra* is symbolic of this truth. Earlier, it has been explained that the etymological as well

²⁶ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ ਨਿਸੰਗੁ॥

Ramkali Dakhani, Oankar, GGS, p. 932.

²⁷ ਜੋ ਉਪਜਿਓ ਸੋ ਬਿਨਸਿ ਹੈ . . .

Sloka M 9, GGS, p. 1428.

²⁸ (i) ਕਾਰੇ ਰੇ ਬਨ ਖੋਜਨ ਜਾਈ॥ . . .

ਪੁਰਖ ਮਧਿ ਜਿਉ ਬਾਸੁ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਮੁਕਰ ਮਾਹਿ ਜੇਸੇ ਛਾਈ॥

ਤੈਸੇ ਹੀ ਰਹਿ ਬਸੇ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਘਟ ਹੀ ਖੋਜਹੁ ਭਾਈ॥

Dhanāsari M 9, GGS, p. 684.

(ii) ਸਾਧੋ ਇਹੁ ਤਨੁ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਜਾਨਉ॥

ਯਾ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਜੋ ਰਾਮੁ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਸਾਚੇ ਤਾਹਿ ਪਛਾਨੋ॥

Ibid., p. 1186.

(iii) "Whoever resorts to any gods as other, thinking,

He is one and I another, knoweth not."

Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, 1.4.10,

(iv) "Some there are so simple as to think of God as if He dwelt there, and of themselves as here. It is not so; God and I are one."

Master Eckhart (1260-1327), *Pieiffer*, p. 469.

as the esoteric meaning of the word *Guru*, is the Dispeller of Darkness, the Light, the spiritual Enlightenment.

This, then, is the symbolic significance of the steel-lance in the hand of the archetypal form of Guru Gobind Singh : Firstly the Guru is the Patron-saint and the Leader to victory of the Mankind, and, secondly, he is the bestower of the Supreme Spiritual Enlightenment and, in essence, is one with the Absolute.²⁹

Let us now consider the white hawk which precariously perches, with open wings, as if about to fly heavenwards, on the upraised left hand, of the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh. We have already alluded to the *gāyatrī* hawk of the *Rgveda*, as the bringer of the draught of immortality from heavens to the mortals. But this symbol is, perhaps, the oldest and the most ancient mankind has known and adopted. *Rgvedic* hymns are believed to be 3500 years old by European scholars, and of timeless antiquity, *anādi*, by the Hindus. The Roman and Greek concepts of Jupiter and Zeus are nearly of the same antiquity, as ascribed by European scholarship to vedic hymns. If Greek Aryans had adopted this pregnant symbol, it is but to be expected that the Perso-Aryans must also be familiar with it. And, it indeed is so.

All the bas-reliefs above the royal Achaemenian tombs at *Naqshi-Rustam*, represent the prince, sacrificing before an altar of sacred fire, and above him is a winged disc out of which rise the head and shoulders of Ahuramazda, who according to the engravings on these bas-reliefs,

is a great god, he is great above all gods, he it is who has created heavens and earth, who has created men, and who has loaded with favours the human beings who dwell upon it.³⁰

He who looks on this bas-relief figure of Ahuramazda, cannot fail to be struck with its basic similarity with the representations of Viṣṇu,

²⁹ Baba Ram Singh Kuka, a dynamic Sikh savant and leader (1885), described the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh as, 'the Friend, Protector and Guide in this world as well as the next :'

ਦਸਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਗੀਤ ਸੰਭਾਰੇ, ਲੋਕ ਦੋਹਨ ਕੇ ਜੋ ਰਖਵਾਰੇ॥

³⁰ Ghirshman, *Iran*, p. 155.

shown as borne through the skies on the back of a hawk, or *garuṇa*, which is a derivative of the Sanskrit root, *gr*, "to swallow." What is it that this hawk, the *garuṇa*, is supposed to swallow? In the Indian and other ancient traditions, he swallows the snake. In the superb sculpture of Viṣṇu, at Belahan, Java, (11th century), Viṣṇu is shown astride the spacious shoulders of the *garuṇa*, who is clutching an entwined snake in its talons. The wily Hindu hill—chieftains who treacherously attacked Guru Gobind Singh, more than once, to destroy him at the behest of their Imperial master, Aurangzib, are compared to "the snake" by the poet, on whom Guru Gobind Singh swooped like the mighty, *garuṇa*.³¹

What is this 'snake' whom this graceful sky-bird the "fair-winged," the *suparna*, of the Vedic tradition of the *Brāhmaṇas*, the Appendices to the Vedas, devours?

This takes us back into the history of mankind, other than the Vedic tradition. In the Louvre at Paris, there is an art treasure, the sacrificial goblet of King Gudea of Lagash, a Mesopotamian monarch of the Sumerian period. It is dated, by very careful calculations, to be of not later than 2600 B.C. On this goblet is engrossed a design, showing two entwined snakes enclosed by two erect birds standing on eagle's claws.

The symbolic animals on the Sumerian chalice, migrated at an early period westward into Greece as well as eastward into India; for we read in the *Iliad* that an eagle, soaring above the Greek heroes and bearing in its claws a bleeding snake, was interpreted as an auspicious omen³² by the soothsaying priest, Kalchas, who regarded it as an augury of the Greek victory over Troy.³³

Like a river winding its way, the serpent creeps along the ground; it dwells in the earth and starts fourth like a fountain from its hole.

³¹ ਸਰਪਿੰਦ ਗਿਰਿੰਦ ਖਗਿੰਦ ਤੁਲੰ॥

Gurpratāpsūrya, I (i) 13.23.

³² In 1925, during the days of the non-violent struggle of the Sikhs, in the Guru kā Bagh battle-front, a similar and regular flight of a white eagle over the marching Akalis, was popularly interpreted as an auspicious sign of ultimate victory for the Akalis.

³³ Heinrich Zimmer, *Art of Indian Asia*, I, p. 51.

It is an embodiment of the water of life issuing from the deep body of Mother earth. Earth is the primordial mother of life; she feeds all creatures out of her substance, and again devours all; she is the common grave. She clasps to her bosom the life she has brought forth; denying to it the unbounded freedom of celestial space. In contrast, the infinity of heaven denotes the free sway of the unbound spirit freely roaming as a bird, disentangled from the fetters of the earth. The eagle represents this higher spiritual principle, released from the bondage of the matter, and soaring into the truculent ether, mounting to its kin, the stars, and even to the Supreme Divine Being above them.³⁴

This is the spiritual antagonism of the bird (hawk) and the serpent heaven and earth, of spirit and matter, which is symbolised in this most ancient bird-serpent motif of human arts. And this, undoubtedly, is the significance of the white hawk, with out-stretched wings, perched on the left hand of the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh. The hawk is white, for it represents the Spiritual Knowledge, which is colourless, *anil*.³⁵ With the steel lance in His right hand, the Guru pierces the dark curtains of Nescience, *avidyā*, and on His left hand perches the white hawk, symbolising the pure Spirit, which thus released from the Nescience, leads men on and on towards victory, here and hereafter. That is why the Roman legions in their career of world conquest carried the eagle-standard in front. That is why the armies of Napoleon adopted eagle insignia on their banners. It was for this reason that Nazi troops adopted the same symbol as representative of their will to victory. On this count the elite troops of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Akāl Regiment, trained under General Ventura, had the eagle embossed upon their dark-blue colours.

The aigrette of jewels crowning the turban of the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh bears an equally profound spiritual significance as the other symbols already considered. Psycho-physical chromatism, that is, the theory that colours are basically related to higher mental

³⁴ *Ibid.*, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilisation*, pp. 74-75.

³⁵ ਆਦਿ ਅਨੀਲੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਅਨਾਹਤਿ ਜੁਗੁ ਜੁਗੁ ਏਕੋ ਵੇਸੁ।

experiences, is common to Buddhism and Hinduism, both, as well as to later Vedic speculations embodied in the *tantras*. The mystical system of Islam, Sufism, also recognises this parallelism between psychical and physical chromatism. The plane of experience, the highest to which the individual human consciousness can ascend before its contact with or absorption into the Universal unconscious, is referred to by Guru Nānak, as 'peopled by forms of white pure light, propelled by the Will of God.'³⁶

But before explaining the theory of spiritual significance of colours, let us first understand the nature and significance of physical colours. The word, 'colour' is connected with the Latin, *celare*, to hide, and the root meaning of colour, therefore, is indicative of covering. The Sanskrit, *ranja*, the equivalent of English, 'colour', has primarily a psychological connotation, that of a pleasant excitation in the mind, an evocation of a mood, and it is only secondarily that the word is employed as indicative of sensations or sensibilia. These Latin and Sanskrit words themselves furnish an excellent illustration of a part of the meanings which the expression, 'psychophysical chromatism' is intended to convey. The visual apparatus of the eye enables us to distinguish between not only differences of form and size of the objects seen, but also differences in the character of the light received from them. These latter are the differences of colour. As Sir Isaac Newton demonstrated, the white colour is not the simplest and purest of all the colours known. When white light is decomposed by a prism, it splits into spectral colours of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet, one colour passing gradually into the other without abrupt transition. White, therefore, is not a simple colour, but is merely the colour of sunlight which fills the eye when at rest. While considering the psychical counterpart of this aspect of the phenomenon of colour, we shall see that pure white light is also the 'colour' of the Pure Consciousness, which is also Absolute Being and Pure Joy,

³⁶ "ਤਿਥੇ ਲੋਅ ਲੋਅ ਆਕਾਰ॥ ਜਿਵ ਜਿਵ ਹੁਕਮ ਤਿਵੇ ਤਿਵ ਕਾਰ॥

Ibid., p. 8.

sat, chit, ānand.³⁷ The colour is not a primary characteristic, such as, form and size, possessed by physical objects, with the exception of self-luminous and fluorescent objects; it is a secondary characteristic in the sense that the physical objects do not possess any power of creating colour, but merely exercise a selective action on the sunlight, absorbing some constituents of the white light of the sun-rays and reflecting or scattering the remainder, which remainder is then perceived by the human eye as colours. A red flower, for example, absorbs the blue and green rays and most of the yellow, while the red rays are scattered. It is, thus, perceived as of 'red' colour. A white object is one which reflects nearly all the lights of all the sun rays, and a black object absorbs nearly all. A transparent body is that which transmits all the light rays; and a body which transmits all the visible rays equally well is said to be colourless. The question of composition of colours is largely a physiological one, for, by mixing two colours, a new colour can be produced. It is demonstrable that the sensation of colour-vision is threefold, in the sense that any colour can be produced by the combination, in proper proportions, of three standard colours. There has been some difference of opinion as to what these standard or primary colours are. The Hindus and Buddhists, judging from their iconographic and mythological chromatism, regard the red, yellow, and blue, as the primary colours, a view which is commonly shared by painters and others, since all the known brilliant hues can be derived from the admixture of red, yellow, and blue pigments. On the psychic plane, the Hindus and Buddhists have adopted the red as representing their Śāktic disciplines, and yellow as their ascetic disciplines. The 19th century physicist, Sir David Brewster also considered that, red, yellow and blue were the primary colours. J. Clerk Maxwell in his, *Scientific Papers*, however, appears to show that they should be, red, green and blue, and this seems also the view of the ancient Semitic

³⁷ (a) "The Perfect" means the identity of idea and existence accompanied by pleasure."—Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, p. 244, and p. 413. See also, his *Essay on Truth*, p. 409.

(b) सदा सच्चानंद सत्तुं प्रतापी॥
करीमुल कुनिंदा समसुल निवासी॥

psycho-physical chromatists.³⁸ Islam, has adopted green as the primary colour representative of its spiritual dynamism. Guru Gobind Singh obviously agreed with this latter view, for, he must have argued, how else could it be that the 'red' and 'yellow' of the Hinduism and Buddhism were absorbed by the 'green' of Islam in the spiritual ethos of mankind. Guru Gobind Singh, significantly, adopted the indigo blue, as the 'colour' of the Order of the Khalsa, for, this is the only primary colour, which can absorb, without blemish, the red, yellow, and green of the mighty spiritual movements of the Aryan and Semitic races of the mankind.

The significance of physical aspect of colour is not confined to distinction alone. The animal colours are found to have great biological significance also. Their significance in the procreative processes of life, such as, sexual relationships, and the endurance of life-forms, that is, struggle for existence, is unquestioned. Cryptic colouring is by far the commonest use of colour in the struggle for existence—, both,

³⁸ In the later Tantric Mahāyān Buddhism, called Lamāism, all the four colours, red, yellow, green and blue seem to have been regarded as primary. In Tibetan iconography and sacred paintings, the five Celestial Buddhas are assigned these four colours, the white, as compound of all the colours having been assigned to the fifth. Thus the blue Buddha is *Vairochana* or *Samantabhadra*; the white Buddha, *Vajra-sattava*; the yellow Buddha, *Ratna-sombhava*; the red Buddha, *Amitabha*; and the green Buddha, *Amogha-Siddhi*. All these five Buddhas are the spatial reflexes of the Absolute. *Ādi Buddha*, *Vairochan* filling the central space of the Universe which covers *Jambūdvipa*, the continent of India, while the other four Buddhas filling the remaining four quarters of the Universe. The predilection of Guru Gobind Singh for blue, leads to interesting speculations from this point of view, indicating the centrality and focal significance of the Order of the Khalsa in reference to Society and Mankind.

Dr. Evans-Wentz, in editing *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, points out (p. 120) that each of the Celestial Buddha symbolises definite spiritual attributes of the Cosmos. "Thus, *Vairochan* is . . . the universal force producing or giving form to everything, physical and spiritual. *Vajra-sattava* is the universal force . . . for neutralising by merit, evil karma; *Ratna-sambhava*, for reproduction of all things desired; *Amitabha*, for long life and wisdom; *Amogha-siddhi*, for success in arts and crafts. In *Vajra-sattava* . . . all the Deities . . . merge."

The blue celestial Buddha, *Vairochana*, is "the chief of the Five *Dhyānt* Buddhas". (p. 16).

Here, it is worth recalling that Madonna, the Universal Mother-goddess, is invariably clothed blue in Byzantine art.

anti-cryptic, that is, for the purpose of attack, and pro-cryptic for self-defence. Sematic use of colour is also widely spread in the animal kingdom, which is for the purpose of warning, so that the animal marked by that particular colour can be easily seen, well remembered, and avoided in future. The sematic use of colour may be aposematic, for the purpose of warning an enemy off, and episematic, for the purpose of assisting the individuals of the same species to keep together when their safety depends upon numbers, or easily to follow each other to a place of safety, the young and inexperienced, benefiting by the example of the older. Man, throughout the ages, has made much skilful use of these biological functions of colour in his civil and military life. The terror which the dark-blue uniforms of the Akālīs struck in the hearts of the Afghān enemies in the Nowsherā religious battle, over a hundred years ago, has been succinctly acknowledged in prose and verse of Pastu, by eye witnesses.³⁹

Colour, like music, can do powerful things to our moods also. Some colours stimulate us to greater mental and physical activity, while some others can be very depressing. Colour can warm or cool us and, thus, cheat the thermometer by making it look like a liar. By reducing eye-strain they are making thousands of once tedious factory jobs no more fatiguing than listening to pop-music. Colour is one of the strongest single influence in our lives, though the modern man has taken too long to discover it.

For their psychological effects colours of the spectrum can be divided into two main groups, the red, orange and yellow end of the spectrum, which is warming, cheering and stimulating and the green, blue and violet end which is cooling and relaxing, or if it is far enough removed from the reds and yellows, sobering and inducing introversion. These influences are the result of two factors : (1) optical capabilities of the eye itself, and (2) effect of Nature through thousands of generations in familiarising us with certain colours. For, 30,000 years, since 'fire' was discovered, man has sat around

سپیکان و جنگ دا اکال کڈو- سپیکان
 نال توڑ تہنوں ہر حک نہننگ دیے =

[ਸਿੱਖ ਜੰਗ ਵਿਚ 'ਅਕਾਲ'
 'ਅਕਾਲ' ਦਾ ਨਾਅਰਾ ਲਾਉਂਦੇ
 ਹਨ। ਸਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਪੱਕੇ ਨਿਰੰਗ
 (ਮਗਰਮੱਛ) ਹਨ।]

camp fires as a focal point of his entertainment. Deep down in his subconscious the lure and enchantment of the 'fire' is still there. To-day the colours of 'fire', red, orange and yellow may exist as paint on a wall, but in man's subconscious they will always suggest a fire's warmth and cheer.

Because of their shorter wave-lengths, 'green' and 'blue' are focussed less distinctly by the eye. They are soft, slightly hazy and produce a soothing and relaxing psychological effect. In the language of the Sāṅkhya categories they are invested with *sāttvikagūṇa*, while the former are characterised by the *tāmsikagūṇa*. Nature has splashed 'blue' and 'green' everywhere. We associate 'green' with tranquil landscapes and the effect of this association on the mind is restful, *sukhaprada*, while the 'blue', the tint of sky, is the colour of Nature/s distant vistas and it is not only eye-relaxing but also mind-resting, *śāntiprada*. Blue, as associated with the chill of water, tends to induce concentration and introspection of mind.

In modern hospitals colour is marshalled as aid to healing. Hospital—white is on the way out, and 'green' and 'blue' in the operation—theatres is pressed into service to make patients relax, so as to hasten anaesthesia. Likewise, food-research has shown that warm colours, yellow, peach-cream with smaller areas of orange as trim, stimulate our appetite and this explains the ubiquitous use of turmeric, *haldi*, and saffron, *kesar*, as colouring agents in Hindu culinary techniques from ancient times.

But the colour, in its physical aspect is contingent upon the human eye. What about the colours of the forms and apparitions that arise before the mind's eye in *dhyāna* and dream? There the colours are not contingent either upon the physical human eye or the sunlight being absorbed or scattered by the physical objects. The *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* (v. 3) says that the phenomenal world, which is a modification of the Self, "has four parts, *pāda*", "like the four feet of a cow" adds the commentary of Śaṅkrācārya to this verse. "The first part is the objective world, *vaiśvānara*. Its field, *kṣetra*, is the waking state. Its

consciousness is outward-turned."⁴⁰ It is in this field that, physical colours exist and are perceived by the eye. Further on, the Upaniṣad says that, "the second part of the Self is luminous, *taijas*, Its field is the dream-state. Its consciousness is inward-turned." (v.4). It is this subtle, luminous and fluid world of apparitions which opens the door to the store-house of memories and the racial sub-conscious layers of archetypal forms, grounded in the Universal Unconscious and the World-Soul, the *Paramātmā*. The psychical colours exist on this plane of the consciousness, in this "part of the self", as the *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* puts it. This is how the colours acquire a psychical significance grounded in the ontological aspect of God and the Absolute. It is for this reason that they form an integral part of Buddhist and Hindu iconography and mythology, the identical reason for which their use was made by Guru Gobind Singh, when assuming his archetypal form.

The best evidence available on these psychic colours is naturally the experience of those, who either through yogic discipline, or through some other extraordinary extra-psychic experience, have gone beyond the earth-bound and body-bound plane of consciousness, and thus have eliminated the physical sensibilia and the physical light upon which the physical colours are contingent. That such going beyond is possible and is known, is beyond doubt Apulieus in *Metamorphoses* informs us that,

I drew nigh to the confines of death. I trod the threshold of Proserpine (where the departed souls dwell).⁴¹

The art of transferring the consciousness-principle from the mundane body plane to the post-mortem plane, as a necessary practice of higher yoga discipline, was practised in the monasteries of Tibet, till quite recently as, *pho-wa*.⁴² On the authority of such evidence, an ancient Tibetan Ms., *Bardo Thodol*, which enshrines ancient teaching

⁴⁰ स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्नप्रज्ञः सप्ताह एकोन विंशति मुखः
प्रवित्तमुक् तैजसो द्वितीयः पादः

Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad, IV.

⁴¹ Apulieus, *Metamorphoses* (tr.), Ch. XI, p. 22.

⁴² W.Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, pp. 169-70.

but which is believed to have been first committed into writing by or under the aegis of Padamsambhava, the Nālandā Professor, in the 8th century, has now been made available in English translation, as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, profusely edited by Dr. Evans-Wentz of the Oxford University. This extraordinary book, first published in 1927, contains a minute and detailed record of the experiences and states through which human soul, or consciousness-principle, as the Buddhists prefer to call it, passes after death, till it takes rebirth on the physical plane. Throughout these remarkable and panoramic spectacles that the disembodied soul witnesses, the colour vision is their most prominent and distinctive characteristic. The death-process is a reverse of the birth-process; in the one, the soul incarnates into physical body, while in the second, it discarnates from it. After this discarnation, there is an intermediate state, in Tibetan, *bardo*, which is the same word as in Punjabi, *do bār*, that is, 'two gates'. In this *bardo* the soul experiences, quite in another way, all that it has experienced heretofore, from the moment it is individualised and separated from God at its creation, and all the visions of heavens and hells, terrors and judgements, punishments and rewards, and incarnation into non-human existence, such as *devas*, *asuras*, *pretas*, devils; furies and fairies, recorded from times immemorial in the mystic and esoteric literatures of mankind, are just ways of describing these *bardo* experiences. Accordingly, immediately after the moment of death, the soul, so to speak, bounces up, into its original Source, the qualityless God, but weighed by its karmic propensities, as it is, it slowly starts sinking earthwards, and it is during this descent that the soul goes through the experiences and the states in the *bardo* and passes through numerous planes of existence according to its karma and its deserts, till propelled by its own karmic force it enters a womb to take rebirth on the earthly plane. About the first moment of after-death experience, the departed soul is advised thus, in the Tibetan text :

O, nobly-born, listen now thou art experiencing the Radiance of the Pure Light of Pure Reality. Recognize it. O, nobly-born, thy present intellect, in real nature, void, not formed into anything as regards characteristics or colour, naturally void.⁴³

⁴³ Evans Wentz, *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, p. 95.

It is this Clear Light, Colourlessness, the Absolute Reality, which is symbolised by the white colour of the hawk of Guru Gobind Singh.⁴⁴ But it is only a perfected yogi, blemishless saint, one ripe in the discipline of *nāma-simran*, who can abide in this Void of Clear Light. Normally, the karma-bound soul is incapable of abiding in God, and it regains awareness of its own individuation, and, thus, it descends to the region of "the Secondary Clear Light," as the Tibetan text calls it. "While on the second stage of the *bardo* one's body is of the nature of that called, the shining illusory body"⁴⁵, called *māyārūpa* in Sanskrit, and 'astral body' by the theosophists. This is the *rūpāloka* of the Buddhists, the *deva* worlds of the Hindus, and the next world of the Semitics, Christianity and Islam. This is the realm of the gods, the *dhyāni* Buddhas, the archetypal forms, grounded in what Guru Nānak calls, *sachakhaṇḍ*, "wherein the Formless resideth," and wherein "there are countless nonillions of universes, para-universes and planetary systems," and "where there are the archetypal forms of pure white light."⁴⁶ When the departed soul is descending down through this region, "at that time, sounds, lights and rays are experienced."⁴⁷

At that time all the *saṁsārs* will be in revolution and the phenomenal appearances that thou wilt see then, will be in revolution; and the phenomenal appearances that you wilt see then, will be the *devas* and deities. The whole space will appear deep blue. Then from the Centre, the *Dhatugarbha*, the *Bhagvan* Vairochana, of pure dazzling colour will manifest himself to thee. It is the aggregate of matter resolved into its primordial state which is the blue light.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Guru Gobind Singh actually had a white hawk searched for and brought, all the way from Ghazana in Central Asia, to him at Anandpur, at enormous trouble and expense, round about A.D. 1695.

⁴⁵ Evans-Wentz (tr.), *op. cit.* p. 100.

⁴⁶ ਸਚਖੰਡਿ ਵਸੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ। . .

ਤਿਥੈ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰਭੰਡ॥

ਜੇ ਕੋ ਕਥੈ ਤ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਅੰਤ। ਤਿਥੈ ਲੋਅ ਲੋਅ ਆਕਾਰ॥

Japu, GGS, p. 8.

⁴⁷ Evans-Wentz (tr.), *op. cit.* p. 102.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 105-6.

In a similar manner, according to this Tibetan text, various manifestations of archetypal forms appear to the astral vision of the departed soul, in this *bardo* stage, in a panorama of psychical colours and hues, representing the four elementary colours as recognised by Mahāyāna Buddhism, blue yellow, green and red, respectively, with their intermediary hues, representative of the karmic propensities and constituents of the individual soul, or the consciousness-aggregate.

This furnishes us with a clue to the understanding of the primacy of the blue colour, to which Guru Gobind Singh gave preference over all the other primary colours, and the white colour of the hawk, as well as to the dazzling light of the jewels of his aigrette, the "white colour" of Vairocana as the translator of our text says, but "dazzling light" of the original.

This dazzling light of the bejewelled aigrette forms the facade, as has already been said, of the conical indigo blue turban of the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh. What is this symbolic of, is the question, an answer to which we set out to discover, originally, leading to the fore-going dissertation.

Earlier, we have referred to extra-psychical perceptions and visions available through yogic discipline. Then we have examined certain available evidence of similar perceptions and visions experienced in the post-mortem, intermediate, *bardo*, state. Success in a particular branch of the yoga is called, *siddhi*, perfection, powers, that is, extraspsychical powers. The famous and ancient aphorisms of yoga, the *Yogasūtra* of Pātanjali, expressly state that these extraspsychic powers, *siddhis*, "are either revealed at birth, or acquired by medicinal herbs, *auśadhi*, or by repetition of sacred words, *jāp*, or through asceticism, *tapas*, or through illumination, *jñāna*."⁴⁹ The hoary Indian tradition of the use of Vedic *soma*, and opium, *cannabis sativa*, or *bang*, and wine by ascetics, to induce trance and extra-psychical visions, originates from the theory of this aphorism. That drugs are capable of inducing such trances and visions, is neither fanciful nor

⁴⁹ Purohit Swami (tr.), *Aphorisms of Yoga*, p. 79.

confined to Hindu practices. Red Indians of South America have known from ancient times that the roots of an indigenous cactus plant, when consumed, produce or induce trances and visions, which are highly prized and thought of by the Red Indians for their own quality and also as aids to clairvoyance and prognostication. This cactus plant was first systematically studied by a German pharmacologist, Ludwig Lewin, in 1886, and hence the scientific name of this cactus, *Anhalonium Lewinii*. The active principle of this cactus root, peyote, has now been isolated and synthesised as mescaline. Recently, a considerable interest has been shown in the vision-inducing properties of mescaline, and its chemical and physiological actions on human brain have been studied. It would seem that the human brain is provided with a number of enzyme systems which coordinate its working. Some of these enzymes regulate supply of glucose to brain cells, and it has been surmised, that mescaline prohibits these enzymes, thus lowering the amount of glucose, which the human brain constantly needs, for functioning normally. The drug, mescaline, by rendering the glucose in the brain in short supply, opens the doors of perception, which are abnormal and which lead to extra-psychical visions. From these facts, it has been guessed that mental disorder is due to chemical disorder, resulting out of psychological disorder and discontents affecting adrenal glands. Aldous Huxley experimented on himself, recently, with mescaline, and has recorded a most interesting account of his visions, induced by this drug.⁵⁰ The author has argued with much plausibility that these visions are qualitatively identical with those recorded as having been experienced by saints and mystics of medieval Christianity and other religions. Exception has been taken to this comparison and identification, both. It has been argued that psychochemicals, *auśadhi*, can only prepare the mind for a natural mystical experience by providing an analogous experience but the one is no substitute for the other, since mystical experience is an awareness of union with an aspect of Reality not ordinarily available in the process of discursive reasoning. A mystical experience is characterised by (1) a sense of gift, 'grace' from above passively received but not induced, and (2) it unites the individual, in some measure, with the Divine,

⁵⁰ Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception*.

leading to a holier life. The drug-induced hallucinations lack both these characteristics. But the vision-inducing properties of mescaline and other hallucinogens have been denied by nobody. Now, Aldous Huxley has written another little book⁵¹ elaborating his previous theme about the physiological bases and nature of these and such other visions. The theory, which the writer of these lines heard from his teacher, Dr. Broad, as his student at Cambridge in 1931-33, that the function of human brain, nervous system and sense organs, is eliminative and not productive, and that each person at each moment, is one with the Universal Mind, but that brain etc. eliminate this limitless mass of knowledge, irrelevant for the individual mind, a doctrine, with which the writer was familiar from his childhood through hearing of the Sikh scripture⁵² is now being mentioned as a suitable and satisfactory hypothesis which explains occurrence of these drug-induced trances and visions. These drug-induced visions, Huxley argues, are of the same category as the prophetic revelation, an assertion with which Pātanjali might agree. When the confines and boundaries of the normal conscious mind are transgressed, no matter how, through fasting, mortification, spiritual discipline or drugs, its antipodes, the vast regions of the hidden Universal Mind, are revealed in visions which have a pure intrinsic value and are no less valid and real than what the normal individual mind touches through normal perceptions. He argues that physiological fact does not invalidate spiritual meaning, and correlates a mass of scientific data of physiological nature with varieties of visionary and mystical experiences. But we are concerned here merely with what he may have to say about the significance of 'the dazzling light' which is emitted by the bejewelled aigrette of the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh.

These visions of the Other World, this sojourn of the human mind into its antipodes, those regions which lie not in the direction of the physical phenomenon, but in the opposite direction of God, do they disclose any common feature in all their myriads of patterns of which men have left a record?

⁵¹ *Heaven and Hell.*

⁵² ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਆਪਿ ਮਨ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਮਹਿ॥

First and most important is the experience of light. Everything seen by those who visit the mind's antipodes is brilliantly illuminated and seems to shine from within.⁵³

Praeternatural light and colour are common to all visionary experiences. And alongwith light and colour there goes, in every case, a recognition of heightened significance. The self-luminous objects, which we see in the mind's antipodes, possess a meaning; and this meaning is, in some way, as intense as their colour. Significance here is identical with being, for, at the mind's antipodes, objects do not stand for anything but themselves,⁵⁴

that is, they have no symbolic value there. Then the author reverts to an examination of the data left to us by the "cultural traditions of Other Worlds, the worlds inhabited by gods, by the spirits of the dead, by man in his primal state of innocence."

[Reading these accounts], we are immediately struck by the close similarity between induced or spontaneous visionary experience and the heavens and fairy-lands of folklore and religion. Praeternatural light, praeternatural intensity of colouring, praeternatural significance—these are characteristics of all the Other Worlds and Golden Ages. And in virtually every case this praeternaturally significant light shines on, or shines out of a landscape of such surpassing beauty that words cannot express it. Thus, in the Graeco-Roman tradition, we find the lovely Garden of Hesperides, the Elysian Plain, and fair Island of Leuke to which Achilles was translated. Memnon went to another luminous island, somewhere in the East. Odysseus and Penelope travelled in the opposite direction and enjoyed their immortality with Circe in Italy. . . . Magically lovely islands reappear in the folklore of the Celts. . . and in that of the Japanese. And between Avalon in the extreme West and Horaisan in the far East, there is the land of Uttarkuru, the Other World of the Hindus. 'The land', we read in the *Ramayana*, 'is watered by lakes with golden lotuses. There are rivers by thousands, full of leaves of the colour of sapphire and lapis-lazuli;

⁵³ Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception*, p. 13.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

and the lakes resplendent like the morning sun, are adorned by the golden beds of red lotuses. The country all around is covered with jewels and precious stones, with gay beds of blue lotus, golden-petalled. Instead of sand, pearls, gems and gold form the banks of the rivers, which are overhung with trees of bright gold' . . . And this characteristic is common to virtually all the Other Worlds of religious traditions. Every paradise abounds in gems.⁵⁵

In the *Amityadhyānasūtra* of Mahāyāna, the Buddhist paradise of Pure Land, the *Sukhavatī*, is described as constructed of walls of shining silver and gold, it has lakes with diamond-studded banks on which float lotus of pure gold which is self-luminous :

And that *Sukhavatī*, Ānanda, is . . . adorned with jewel-trees . . . and these jewel-trees, Ānanda, have various colours. They are composed of seven colours, innumerable combinations and permutations (here these combinations are given in several folios of the text), of gold, silver, beryl, crystal, coral, red pearls or emeralds. . . . On all sides it is surrounded by golden nets, . . . covered with lotus flowers of precious things. . . . And from each jewel-lotus issue thirtysix hundred thousand *kotis* of rays. . . . And further, Ānanda, in this Buddha-field, there are no where any mountains . . . but the Buddha-field is every where even. . . and in all its parts, the ground contains a great variety of jewels and gems. . . . And many kinds of rivers flow in Sukhavatī. . . in them there are bunches of flowers to which various jewels adhere. . . . And the sound which issues from these great rivers is as pleasant as that of a musical instrument which consists of hundreds of thousands of *kotis* or parts, and which, skilfully played, emits a heavenly music. . . . And Ānanda, both the banks of these great rivers are lined with variously scented jewel trees. . . . And that, Ānanda, is the reason why it is called, *Sukhavatī*. . . . Whatever the dwellers in this Pure Land may wish for, comes to them. . . . If they wish for a palace of a certain colour, distinguishing marks, construction, height and width, made of various precious things, adorned with hundreds of thousands of pinnacles, while inside it various heavenly-woven

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-23.

materials are spread out, and it is full of couches strewn with beautiful cushions, then just such a palace is there. In those delightful palaces, surrounded and honoured by seven time seven thousand *apsaras*, heavenly maidens, they dwell, play enjoy and disport themselves.⁵⁶

Any body reading verses of the *Qur'ān* containing description of the Muslim paradise, cannot but be struck by the basic similarity of passages in the Buddhist and Islamic narratives. That the *Qur'ān* narrative may represent a deposit of Hindu Buddhist ideas on the subject is likely, in view of the early trade connections between Arabia and India, and the infiltration of Buddhist ideas into Syria and Middle East, through Central Asiatic Buddhist centres that flourished from pre-christian times till about A.D. 1000, when Muslim invasions and upsurges put a violent end to them, but in view of the genuine ring of conviction with which Mohammad describes the landscape and *houries* of the paradise, it is more than probable that it represents his own visionary experiences, such as would naturally be vouchsafed to a prophet of his stature.

These paradises of mankind, always marked by preponderance of dazzling jewels, emitting immaculate rays of light of a myriad hues, constitute the very essence of the visionary experience, a matter of immediate experience, a psychological fact, which has been recorded in the religious literature and folklore of many a country and age, race and climate. These far-off regions, separated from our empirical world by the boundaries of the individuation of human mind, are, for that matter, not less real, than the tables and chairs of our living rooms, or our neighbours. They are the Platonic Ideas, the archetypes, "the psychological originals of those beings who, in the theology of every religion, serve as intermediaries between man and the Clear Light."⁵⁷

This Clear Light, the God, being the only *summum bonum* recognised by the Sikh Gurus, is the reason why in the voluminous *Guru Granth*, references to the delightful antipodes of visionary experience are so scanty but certainly not absent. "In a hymn (Sorath, Nāmdev) it is averred : "I state what I have seen . . . There is dazzling

⁵⁶ E. Conze (ed.), *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages*, pp. 202-06.

⁵⁷ Aldous Huxley, *Heaven and Hell*, p. 38.

luminance and superbly enchanting continuous music. . . abundance of jewelled gem-flowers emitting blinding flashes of lightening-intensity: *jābdekhā tab gāvā, . . . jāhjhilimilikār(u) disantā, tah anahad sabad bajantā . . . ratan kamal koṭharī chamakār bijul tahlī*.⁵⁸ In the famous hymn "That Gate", there is an unambiguous reference to the musical harmonies of the rivers and winds of the Pure Land of the *Amītyadhyānasūtra* of the Buddhists.^{59a} Guru Nānak, reproduces, almost word for word, the description of "the palaces with walls of pearls and studded with many myriads of precious stones," and peopled by "celestial nymphs, voluptuous and bedecked with precious jewels," but always with the admonition "tarry not here, this is not the destination."^{59b} For, vision is not the same as union with God vouchsafed by mystic experience. Visionary experience is still beset with subject-object antagonism, while mystical experience is beyond the pair-of-opposites, *advādvā*, as the *Bhagavadgītā* calls it. This visionary Other World of paradises is merely a vantage point from which the Glory of God may be beheld more clearly than from the level of the ego's empirical experience.

And therein lies the significance and use of these visionary experiences for a man of religion, for a Sikh.

The precious stones, diamonds, crystals, pearls, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, jade, and beryle, etc. have, throughout the ages, exercised enormous fascination and attraction for men, not because they are rare and difficult to obtain, as the utilitarian would suggest, but because they

⁵⁸ ਜਬ ਦੇਖਾ ਤਬ ਗਾਵਾ॥ . . .

ਜਹ ਭਿਲਿਮਿਲਿ ਕਾਰੁ ਦਿਸੰਤਾ॥ ਤਹ ਅਨਹਦ ਸਬਦ ਬਜੰਤਾ॥

... ..
ਰਤਨ ਕਮਲ ਕੋਠਰੀ॥ ਚਮਕਾਰ ਬੀਜੁਲ ਤਹੀ॥

Sorath, Nām Dev, GGS, pp. 656-57.

⁵⁹ a) ਵਾਜੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਦ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਸੰਖਾ ਕੇਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਵਾਵਟਹਾਰੇ॥

ਕੇਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਰਾਗ ਪਰੀ ਸਿਉ ਕਹੀਅਹਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਗਾਵਟਹਾਰੇ॥

Sodar, M 1, GGS, p. 8.

b) ਮੋਤੀ ਤ ਮੰਦਰ ਉਸਰਹਿ ਰਤਨੀ ਤ ਹੋਹਿ ਜੜਾਉ॥ . . . ਮੋਹਣੀ ਮੁਖਿ ਮਟੀ

ਸੋਰੇ ਕਰੇ ਰੰਗਿ ਪਸਾਉ॥ ਮਤੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਭੂਲਾ ਵੀਸਰੈ ਤੇਰਾ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨਾਉ॥

Sri Rāg, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 14.

may remind our unconscious of what it enjoys at the mind's antipodes, and these obscure intimations of life in the Other World are so fascinating that we pay less attention to this world and so become capable of experiencing consciously something of that, which, unconsciously, is always with us.⁶⁰

The dazzling bejewelled aigrette of Guru Gobind Singh has a symbolic meaning and a significance, both. Its symbolic meaning is that the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh is a Being of the antipodal regions of the Mind and is thus grounded in the Ultimate Reality of God. The Guru has the power to transport individual consciousness into union with God, as "a ford helpeth a non-swimmer cross a turbulent river, or a boatman taketh him to the yonder shore."⁶¹ Secondly, the jewels of the aigrette are *per se*, vision-inducing; they are *divino*, reminiscent of Divinity, and the Guru, therefore, is truly entitled to wear them in His aigrette, unlike the earthly kings, who make a false use of them to make people believe that their *de facto* domination over their fellow beings is also a *de jure* *divino* domination. 'The Guru is the true king on earth, the *saccā pādīshāh*,⁶² and 'God alone is the true Sovereign and the earthly kings are just false pretenders.'⁶³

Now, we must consider the dark blue horse, on which the archetypal Guru Gobind Singh is mounted.

We shall examine three aspects of this question. Is the blue horse technically a *vāhana*, a "vehicle", as such is necessarily associated with every Hindu god, Buddhist divinity and Jain *tīrthāṅkara*? Apart from general considerations, favouring the primacy of blue colour by

⁶⁰ Aldous Huxley, *op. cit.* p. 27.

⁶¹ i) ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰ ਸਮਾਨਿ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਈ ਸਾਚੇ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਪਾਲਾ॥

Asa, M 1, GGS, p. 437.

ii) ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪੋਤੁ ਹੈ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੁਤੀਏ ਗੁਰ ਖੇਵਟ ਸਬਦਿ ਤਰਾਇਆ ਰਾਮ॥

Bihagra, M 4, *Ibid.*, p. 539.

⁶² ਤੁਧੁ ਡਿਠੇ ਸਚੇ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ ਮਲੁ ਜਨਮ ਜਨਮ ਦੀ ਕਟੀਐ॥

Ramkali, Var-Sata-Balwand, *Ibid.*, p. 967.

⁶³ ਕੋਊ ਹਰਿ ਸਮਾਨਿ ਨਹੀ ਰਾਜਾ॥ ਏ ਭੂਪਤਿ ਸਭ ਦਿਵਸ ਚਾਰਿ ਕੇ ਝੂਠੇ ਕਰਤ ਦਿਵਾਜਾ॥

Bilawal Kabir, *Ibid.* p. 856.

Guru Gobind Singh, is there any additional and specific reason why a blue horse was chosen as the mount of his archetypal Form? What is the symbolic significance of the blue horse in this case?

In the Indian Hindu tradition, the *vāhanas* are the manifestations, on the animal plane, of the divine individuals themselves, of which they are the "vehicles". Primarily, in the Hindu iconography, sculpture and painting, a *vāhana* is a determinant to enable identification of the given sacred image or the work of art. Otherwise, the figures of gods, *tirthankaras*, Buddhas and *bodhisattavas* are so alike and of a general character and appearance that, but for the determinant *vāhana*, it would be almost impossible to say which is which.

The device did not originate in India, but was imported, at an early period, from Mesopotamia. In the art-works of Mesopotamia the device can be traced back to at least 1500 B.C. In the earliest monuments of India (those of the Indus Valley Civilization of the fourth and the third millenniums B.C.), it does not occur. The origin of the determinative "vehicle" is to be sought in the technique of picture or rebus writing of the ancient Near East. According to a common convention of the hieroglyphic, pictographic, scripts, as preserved in the Egyptian and Mesopotamian inscriptions and as underlying the Hebrew and Phoenician alphabets—characters that originally represented objects, were employed to express phonetic values. Then, in order to preclude ambiguity, another symbol the determinant was added, which specified by the determinant or parallel symbol added underneath.⁶⁴

But Guru Gobind Singh is neither a heavenly god, nor a mere prototype, such as the gods and goddesses of Hindu pantheon or formal Buddhas and *bodhisattavas*, or fabulous *tirthankaras* are. He is not one of the various incarnations of a god, such as the ten avatars of Viṣṇu, or various *Kalpa Buddhas*. He is a historical human being whose essence is an archetype, specifically reflexed by God for a definite historical assignment, "to establish the Order of the Khalsa."⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilisation*, pp. 70-71.

⁶⁵ ਪੰਥੁ ਪ੍ਰਚੁਰ ਕਰਥੇ ਕਰੁ ਸਾਜਾ॥

This historical Guru Gobind Singh was circumscribed within the flux of Time which characterises the empirical experience of human beings of this earth, the similar Time-Cycle and stratum by which the gods in heavens are circumscribed. But his archetypal Form is a once-for-all and unique event which belongs to a Time stratum as contra-distinguished from the Eternity of God. It, therefore, is a unique reflex of God and thus self-determined. It has no correspondence amongst the pantheon of gods, prior to the historic event of the birth of Guru Gobind Singh at Paṭnā, Pāṭliputra of the ancient times, and it did not revert to this pantheon after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh at Naṇḍer. It is indeed, the Hand of God, historically manifested in human form to serve a Divine purpose and, henceforth, free and unfettered to work on the human plane, directly or indirectly.⁶⁶ This Guru Gobind Singh does not have to be represented in a "likeness", *pratimā*, for purposes of worship, meditation or invocation, and he is, therefore, not a proper subject of sacred iconography or other sacred visual arts. He, therefore, needs no "determinants" for himself, or for his archetypal Form. His blue horse, therefore, is not his *vāhana*.

We have already digressed in some detail on the significance of the blue colour in the scheme of ideas of Guru Gobind Singh. No doubt, this significance also attaches to the blue colour of the steed of Guru Gobind Singh. But, saturated as Guru Gobind Singh was in the lore of racial symbology of Aryans and schemata of universal myths of mankind, other subsidiary considerations might as well have been and were present in his mind while making the choice of the blue horse.

In the ancient Hindu literature Kalki is mentioned as the future incarnation of Viṣṇu, who will be born in the family of Viṣṇuśaśa, an eminent Brahman of the village Sambhal.⁶⁷ By his irresistible might he will destroy all the evil-doers. He will be the tenth and the last incarnation of Viṣṇu, who will appear at the fag end of the present Time-cycle, *kalpa*, to usher in the Golden Age, afresh.

⁶⁶ ਜਬ ਜਬ ਬਾਰ ਇਕਾਦਸ ਆਵੈ, ਕੋਇ ਨਹੀ ਹਮ ਕੋ ਲਖ ਪਾਵੈ,
ਪੰਥ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਖੇਤੀ ਮੇਰੀ, ਸਦਾ ਸੰਭਾਰ ਕਰਓ ਤਿਸ ਕੇਰੀ॥

Sausakhi MS.

⁶⁷ *Bhagavadapurāṇa*, XII, 2.18.

The Lord will incarnate in the year, *durmukha*, second of the bright half of lunar mansion, *margaśīraś*, Saturday, with moon *pūrvāṣāṛha*, in the *Vṛiddhi-yoga* at three *ghattis* after sun-set, and with the object of destroying the demon, Bhalla, Viṣṇu, Hari, shall assume the form of Kalki.⁶⁸

During the 9th and 10th centuries, when the deluge of Islam overran Buddhism in Central Asia and ruinously approached the gates of northern India, a system of Mahāyāna Buddhism, called, *Kālchakra*, also *Vajrayāna*, developed which is outlined in the text, *Kalchakratāntra*. It was claimed that this teaching was imparted by Gautam, the Buddha, to Suchandra, a king of Sambhala in Orissā, the same Sambhala where Kalki incarnation, according to the ancient tradition, was to be born. The *Kālchakratāntra* was written down in the tenth century—A.D. 965 is the date usually accepted—but the hypothesis of European scholars that the date of the compilation of a text is the date of its publication, is untenable in the case of Hindu texts, and there, in fact, may be a lag of a thousand years and more between the two dates. This *Kālchakratāntra* mentions Islam and Mohammed, but besides the inference that this particular portion of the text is a later, post Mohammed interpolation, nothing more is proved thereby. At this period, during the tenth century, we hear of a *siddha*, Tailopa, who was probably a Turk of Central Asia and was a vigorous opponent of Islam. Another *siddha*, Pito, is also mentioned, and to both these *siddhas*, the promulgation of the *Kālchakra* doctrines is variously ascribed by Tibetan authorities.⁶⁹ The doctrine of *Kālchakra* is centred around the doctrine of *Dhyāni Buddhas* as reflections of the primordial *Ādi Buddha*, and it is possible that the development of this doctrine of

⁶⁸ प्रवृत्ते दुर्मुखे देवि द्वितीया मार्गशीर्षके ।
शुद्धाया शनिवारे च पूर्वषाडविधौशिवे ।
वृद्धियोगे रजःयाच घटिका चित्तये शिवे ।।
मल्लासुर वधार्थं कलिकरूप धरोहरिः ।।

Śaktisamāgamtantra.

⁶⁹ *History of Indian Buddhism*, compiled by Tibetan Lama Tarnath, in 1608, and translated by Schiefner in 1869. Tarnath says (p. 281) that his chief authorities were, the *History of Kshemendrabhadra*, the *Buddhapurāṇa* of Indradatta, and Bhaṭṭaṭṭi's *History of Acharyas*, none of which texts is extant today.

Kālchakra, 'the Wheel of Time', is an amalgam of the *Kalki purāṇa* traditions, with later Nālandā Mahāyāna Buddhism, grafted upon the ancient Turkish concept of the Cycle of Twelve Animals, used for expressing dates. This later recrudescence of the Kalki doctrine⁷⁰, thus, might well be the last attempt of the Central Asian Buddhism to oppose the relentless onslaught of Islam. The iconographic and other visual representations of the Kalki are invariably shown in the form of a man, with a drawn sword in his hand, riding a white horse or bowing before a white horse. Now, the activities and demeanour of Guru Gobind Singh, at the close-end of the seventeenth century was precisely such as would arouse in the imagination of the Hindus of northern and western India, the visions of the Kalki-incarnation of Viṣṇu, and when he inaugurated the Order of the Khalsa, the whole atmosphere was surcharged with such sentiments of self-esteem and human dignity that it was rightly interpreted as a new attitude, inconsistent with docile acceptance by the subject Hindus, of the alien rule of Central Asian Turkish races as standard-bearers of Islam. Everybody took notice of this tremendous event, the Hindus as well as the ruling Turks or Mughals.

The Order of the Khalsa appeared on the scene with a deafening roar and the ruling Turks trembled in their shoes,⁷¹

⁷⁰ The *Dasamgranth* contains some excerpts in free translations from the *Kālchakratāntra* and the *Kalki Purāṇa*, the remnants, no doubt, of some fuller text, prepared at Anandpur, under instructions of Guru Gobind Singh, as a chapter of his project. The Universal Encyclopaedia of Knowledge, the "*Vidyadhar*", the MS. of which, reputed to be weighing many maunds, was destroyed in the inundated rivulet, Sarsā, when the Guru evacuated from Anandpur in A.D. 1704. These excerpts, after the original text, invariably end with the refrain: "Blessed, the village of Sambhal, for there the Viṣṇu shall visit his own temple."

ਭਲ ਭਾਗ ਭਯਾ ਇਹ ਸੰਭਲ ਕੇ ਹਰਿਜੂ ਹਰਿ ਮੰਦਰ ਆਵਹਗੇ।

Kṛṣṇavatār, DG, p. 581.

More than one references to the "84 *siddhas*", that occur in the *Guru Granth* and the writings of Bhāi Gurdās, are the eightyfour patriarchs of the *Vajrayāna* Buddhism mentioned in the *Kālchakratāntra*. Some of the names of these eightyfour *siddhas*, atleast, apparently, are Turkish, e.g. Hanīfā and Kanīfā.

⁷¹ 'ਇਉ ਉਠੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਭਕਾਰ ਕੈ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਡਰਪਾਨ॥'

BG (II) VII-16, p. 667

says a contemporary poet.

The Guru had established a new way of life, grounded in virtue and at relentless war with sin and evil, in the context of the yogic discipline of *nāmasimran*. The people were duly impressed with this new way of life, but the evil ones saw in it a threat to their imperialism,⁷²

says another poet historian.

Exactly twelve hundred years earlier, at the end of the fifth century when the second Huna invasion of India took place, a powerful king of central India, Yaśodharman, inflicted a heavy defeat on the foreign invaders and proclaimed himself or was acclaimed, as the promised Messiah, the *Kalki*⁷³, but since the Golden Age of the Hindus, undisturbed by the "dirty" *malechhā* foreigners, did not dawn as expected, Yaśodharman, the Kalki, was soon forgotten, and the hope of the advent of a future Kalki continued stirring the imagination and hopes of the much-afflicted Hindus, as their tribulations under foreign invasions and subjection did not show signs of abatement. The psychological moment for the incarnation of Kalki was at hand and the events to which Guru Gobind Singh gave birth, appeared as sure signs for identifying Guru Gobind Singh with the tenth and last incarnation of Viṣṇu. Was not Guru Gobind Singh—and it could not be a mere coincidence without cosmic significance—the tenth and the last Guru? He was openly acclaimed as the *Kalghī Avatār* because of the *kalghī*, the jewel-aigrette, he wore, and *kalghī* and Kalki, almost sound the same.

Guru Gobind Singh, apparently was most anxious to discountenance this impression and idea, both. The Sikh Gurus had definitely rejected the theory of *avatāravāda*, the cyclic incarnations of Viṣṇu "to re-establish dharma", the Hindu ethical concepts and social Order, by destroying anti-dharma forces, as we have already explained in the main thesis of this book. *Avatāravāda* is the hub of the post-Vedic Hindu universe, and rejection of this theory alone had given an orientation to the Sikh movement which elevated it to the status of "the

⁷² *Gurpratāpsūrya*, p. III, XIX, 44.

⁷³ Jayaswal, "The Kalki", *Indian Antiquary*, p. 145.

Third Path." Guru Gobind Singh was naturally aware of the implications of *avatāravāda*, of which the Kalki doctrine is a stem. He emphatically declared against his identification with Viṣṇu, saying that,

I never give a thought to Viṣṇu and his human incarnations, such as Kṛṣṇa; for though I have heard of them, I do not possess even a passing acquaintance with them.⁷⁴

Apart from this doctrinal reason, there was another reason, why Guru Gobind Singh was at pains to discourage speculations and dreams about *Kalki*. The Hindu mentality is a curious mixture of what Schubart⁷⁵ calls, Ascetic and Messianic culture prototypes. It rejects empirical existence as basically erroneous and, therefore, has no real interest in it, except as a necessary evil through which a man must pass before his attainment of propinquity to, or identity with, the realms of supra-reality. It, at the same time, passionately desires that the peculiarly Hindu social order should remain intact and undisturbed by the proximity and interference of the non-Hindus, the *malechhas*, and for fulfilment of this latter hope he clings on to the *avatāravāda* and belief in the advent of *Kalki* to intervene to counterbalance the evil forces of non-Hinduism in the sacred land of Bharat. Thus, they are ever full of sadness and full of hope, of dark forebodings and of cheerful prospects, simultaneously, which makes them peculiarly unfit for self-defence. The Order of the Khalsa was to represent the emergence of a new prototype and culture-mentality, basically Heroic, but something more, and for this reason, the Messianic mentality of the Hindus, ever gazing at the distant horizon for the emergence of *Kalki*, had to be discouraged.

These, then, are the two subsidiary symbolic meanings of the blue colour of the horse, the mount of Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru is not an incarnation of Viṣṇu, a periodical intervention of the gods above, to re-establish the Hindu ethical concepts and the social order based

⁷⁴ ਕਿਸਨ ਬਿਸਨ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨਹ ਧਿਆਉਂ॥
ਕਾਨ ਸੁਨੇ ਪਹਿਚਾਨ ਨ ਤਿਨ ਸੋ॥

Kṛṣṇāvatār, *DG*, p. 310.

⁷⁵ F.n. 13, Ch. IV, *ante*.

upon them. He teaches the "third Way of Life". That is why he has not got a white horse as his mount. Besides, he teaches cooperative effort and self-reliance for achieving and maintaining political liberty and social progress, in which context a Sikh's religion has to be practised.

What is the symbolic significance of the horse as such, as the Guru's mount, apart from its colour, if it is not a *vāhana* technically?

Horse occupies quite a prominent place in the complex of Hindu ideas, its mythology and religious rituals. The prototype of 'horse' is the celestial animal, *uchchaiśrava* which appeared out of the Cosmic ocean when it was churned by a co-operative of the gods and titans. It was originally fashioned by the demiurge Brahmā through a *yajna* and since it possessed the secrets of the mystic syllables, *anūsavāra*, Brahmā hid it in the Cosmic ocean for safe-keeping till it was forced-out in the process of ocean-churning, *samudra-manthana*, when Indra appropriated it to himself. Subsequently, however, the god decided to let mankind have it, but before handing it over to mankind the all-knowing god wisely sheared off its wings (*Aśvachikitsā*, I.8.) lest reckless and foolish mortals might use it as a substitute for a proper air-borne machine or as a space-craft to their own peril and also to oblige the animal to keep to the earth in the service of man. The task of taming the horse was entrusted to a sage who fed it on rice, and hence the horse is also named as, *śālihotra*, rice-fed.

At the end of *Kaliyuga*, as we have already seen, Viṣṇu will appear in his tenth and last incarnation, Kalki, riding on a white horse.

Horse is familiar to *R̥gveda* in which there are references to horses and horse-drawn chariots, but rarely are mounted soldiers mentioned in it. The warrior used the horse merely to get to the battle-field; it was too valuable an animal to risk in war-fare. True, Kalhaṇ in his *Rājatarangīnī* (A.D. 1150) not only makes picturesque references to cavalcades of horsemen, *aśavārāḥ* in Sanskrit, *aśvāra* in Hindi, as escorts of kings who entered Śrīnagar in triumph, but he provides no evidence of employment of this animal in active warfare notwithstanding the fact that his intimate understanding of the horse is all too obvious: "the muse fearing contact with the sin of his tale has faltered; like a nervous mare she is with difficulty urged forward by me."

(V.416). As a result the Hindu art and strategy of war-fare became exclusively a matter of entrenched field-fixed battles which placed Hindus at grave disadvantage when after the eleventh century they had to contend with mobile horse-riding invaders from beyond the river Oxus, and this disadvantage became the one major cause of Hindus' repeated defeats in centuries to come, till the Sikh Gurus from the 17th century onwards, assiduously inculcated love for horsebreeding and horse-manship amongst the Sikhs that, in the latter half of the 18th century, they became the finest horsemen of Asia who could meet the foreign Mongol, Turkish and Afghan horsemen as their equals on the battle field.

Prior to the rise of Sikhism in the north of India, the horse, though come down to earth in the service of man from the celestial regions of *Indrāloka*, never became a faithful friend of man in peace and his comrade on the battle-field, so that its role remained confined to establishing supremacy of kings and to the sacrificial ceremonies that followed, such as, *aśvamedha* and the names such as *aśvapati*, horse-lord, and *hayagriva* horse-mane, probably belong to a totemic period of horse-worshipping. Certain omniphagus sects of Hinduism, such as, *Kapālikas*, who compete with our neighbours, the Chinese, in the matter of eating anything including snakes, monkeys and even human flesh, will not touch horse-flesh as food, which seems to take them back to their long-past totemic period. In the First World War (1914-18) in the battle fields of Flanders in France, the Sikh soldiers refused to consume horse meat even under extremities of ration-shortages although their allied European comrade soldiers, freely did so, on the ground, as the Sikh soldiers put it, "a comrade cannot eat the flesh of a comrade at the battle-field even if death from hunger is the consequence." Many such stories were brought back home by Sikh soldiers returning from these European theatres of war that illustrate complete transformation that Sikhism has brought about in the concept of horse-man relationship in human thought, in general, and in Hindu thought, in particular.

This brings us to the Brahmanic god, Hayagriva, subsequently adopted by the Mahāyāna Buddhism, as Valāhaka. Hayagriva means, 'the horse-necked,' or 'the horse-maned,' and *valāhaka* means 'the

cloud-rider.' They both convey ideas of divine help to those faced with a crisis. They are, generally speaking, not human or non-human incarnations of any archetypal god; they are occasional manifestations of Divine concern in each human struggle. In *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, however, Hayagrīva is mentioned as a titanic opponent of *Kṛṣṇa*, and in *Devī Bhāgavatapurāṇa* he is described as archetypal Viṣṇu himself, with his human head replaced by a horse's head. In the older Mahāyāna Buddhist text, *Avilokiteśvaragūṇa-karaṇḍavyūha*⁷⁶ however, the *bodhi-sattva* Avilokiteśvara, is represented as appearing in the form of a cloud-horse to rescue certain ship wrecked sailors stranded on an enchanted island.

The horse has a peculiar mental make-up which distinguishes it from all other domesticated animals, which is its high-spirited nature and its natural capacity for entering into relation with man in his most heightened activity, that of warfare.

The cultural type represented by the Order of the Khalsa is marked by high spirits, particularly in a period of adversity and crisis. There was about Guru Gobind Singh,

a stern Olympian air which he imparted to his followers. His impress not only elevated and altered the constitution of their minds, but contrary to the experience of ethnological experts, it also operated materially and gave amplitude to their physical frames.

They came to be regarded as models of physical beauty and stateliness of manner. A tremendous change was effected in the whole tone of national character. Even those people who were considered as dregs of humanity were changed, as if by magic, into something rich and strange. The sweepers, barbers and confectioners, who had never so much as touched the sword and whose whole generations had lived as grovelling slaves of the so-called higher classes, became, under the stimulating leadership of Guru Gobind Singh doughty warriors who never shrank from fear and who were ready to rush into the jaws of death at the bidding of their Guru.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ अविलोकितेश्वर गुण करण्डव्यूह

⁷⁷ Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, pp. 71-72.

It is this high spirit of which, at the animal level, the horse is a typical representative, and it is this high spirit for which every Sikh, whether in private or in congregation, daily prays : "May God grant us a mind free from pride, and an unsullied intellect, and may this intellect remain under the guidance and protection of God, for ever and for ever. May our spirits remain unbending and expensive under all adversities."⁷⁸

Again in Hindu symbology, "horse" is the body and Spirit is the "rider", and the Sikh way of life is 'to practice religion by maintaining the body in proper health and nourishment : *Nānak so prabhu simarīai tis dehl ko pāl*,⁷⁹ as Guru Nānak says.

This, then, is the symbolic meaning of the horse as the mount of Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru is the representative of the constant Divine concern with the terrestrial struggle of man; and a man of faith, therefore, need never despair :

Just as the mother keeps her child always under her eyes,
And nourishes and cherishes him by food and fondling,
Even so the Guru protects and guides a Sikh
keeping him steady in his love of God.⁸⁰

The members of the Order of the Khalsa must be distinguished by ever present high spirits in moments of difficulty and diversity.

Lastly, the Sikhs must realise that all the sentient beings and the animal kingdom are entitled to compassion and love from man, and not hostility or unconcern.⁸¹

⁷⁸ ਸਿਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਨੀਵਾਂ ਮਤਿ ਉਚੀ, ਮਤਿ ਕਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਆਪ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ, ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ।
"Ardās" in *Sikh Rahat Maryada*, p. 5.

⁷⁹ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਸਿਮਰੀਐ ਤਿਸੁ ਦੇਹੀ ਕਉ ਪਾਲਿ॥

Bihagra, Var, M 4, GGS, p. 554.

⁸⁰ ਜਿਉ ਜਨਨੀ ਸੁਤੁ ਜਣਿ ਪਾਲਤੀ ਰਾਖੇ ਨਦਰਿ ਮਝਾਰਿ॥

ਅੰਤਰਿ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਮੁਖਿ ਦੇ ਗਿਰਾਸੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਪੋਚਾਰਿ॥

ਤਿਉ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਰਾਖਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਪਿਆਰਿ॥॥

Gauri Bairāganī, M 4, GGS, p. 168.

⁸¹ The horse is referred to as "brother" in the Sikh language of the slang. When in 1705, Guru Gobind Singh pursued by the enemy, was advancing towards a
(To continue)

Such are the meanings and significance of the archetypal Form of Guru Gobind Singh.

water reservoir near the present day Muktsar in the Indian Punjab somebody struck his horse to make it go faster. "You accursed man", said the Guru in seeming anger, "what justification had you to strike my brother?"

ਜਾਨ ਭ੍ਰਾਤ ਕੋ ਚਾਬੁਕ ਮਾਰਾ। ਚਲਿਐ ਜਾਤਿ ਜੋ ਹਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰਾ॥

Gurpratāpsūrya, p. 6024.

CHAPTER VII

THE GURU GRANTH

According to one of the latest appraisals of the Sikh religion and practices by a foreigner,

the *Granth* is sacred book of Sikhs. It consists largely of the poems of Nānak, the founder, but also writings of Kabir and the Gurus who succeeded Nānak as leaders of the faith. The 10th Guru refused to appoint a successor to himself declaring that henceforth the *Granth* should be [the visible body] the Guru. And so it has been. In the course of time the *Granth* itself became an object of worship.¹

Another, who is more careful of this fact, states that—

to give his institutions greater permanance and prevent future alterations, Govind refused to appoint any human successor and bade the Sikhs consider the *Granth* as their Guru. 'Whatever ye shall ask of it, it will show you', he said, and in obedience to his command, the book is still invested with a kind of personality and known as Granth Sahib.²

Earlier, the same learned author says that—

the Granth now receives the same kind of respect as the *Qur'ān*, and the first sight of a Sikh temple with a large open volume on a reading desk cannot fail to recall a mosque.³

¹ Vergilius Ferm, *An Encyclopaedia of Religions*, p. 310, Arnold Toynbee in his *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, asserts that Sikhism, in which the Granth is virtually deified, is perhaps the religion in which the idolization of a book has been carried to the farthest lengths. (p. 134).

² Charles Eliot, Sir, *Buddhism and Hinduism*, II, p. 271.

³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 269.

The true facts are that the second Sikh pontiff, Guru Angad (1504-1552), formed the nucleus of the book, now called *Guru Granth Sahib*, by collecting in one manuscript the revelations of Guru Nānak, which then existed in the form of note-books, *pothis*, written by Guru Nānak himself. That these manuscripts were written in, what are now called Gurmukhī characters, by, Guru Nānak himself, is hardly in doubt, for these characters are an improved form of an ancient script, which was then current in the plains of the Punjab, and which, in its evolution, can directly be traced back to the ancient Brahmi and Aramaic scripts, which scripts themselves are believed by some scholars to be direct evolutes from the proto-Indian 3rd millennium B.C. Mohenjodaro script.

Indeed, the entire Brahmi alphabet is shown to be derived from the script of Mohenjodaro and Harrapa. It is also shown that those scholars were not mistaken who connected Brahmi with South Semitic and Phoenician scripts. For there is much evidence to show that these also were derived from the script of Mohenjodaro and Harrapa.⁴

This script is mentioned by the name of Siddhamātrikā, by the Arab indologist, as the Raihan Mohammad Alberuni (d. 1048) in his *Tahqiq-al-Hind*, as the script which was then, as in the previous centuries, the main script of culture and education from Peshawar to Banaras, modern Varanasi, and from Sindh to Kashmir, the precise area, which now appears to be the area of the Mohenjodaro civilization from *circa* 350 B.C. to *circa* 1500 B.C. Siddhamātrikā was a fully established script during the times of Harsavardhan (d. 647) and Siddhamātrikā was the form of writing in which Sanskrit became known in China and Japan; the Devanāgarī script as the standard vehicle of Sanskrit records appeared on the stage much later. The present-day Devanagari script is a form of this Siddhamātrikā, taking its name from the Ujjaini city of medieval central India, which was given the honorific surname of Devanagar, a town inhabited by Brahmins who are gods in human form and the king who is a mortal god, on account of the generous royal endowments made there for the

⁴ G.R. Hunter, *The Script of Harapa and Mohenjodro*, p. 1.

benefit of Brahmins. Since the influence of the *siddhas*, the patriarchs of Kalchakra of Vajrayana from of Mahayana Buddhism was no longer supreme in Northern India by the 16th century, Guru Angad gave this script, as improved upon by Guru Nānak, the name of Gurmukhī, that which is adopted and improved upon, by Guru Angad's guru, Guru Nānak. The credit goes to Guru Nānak for having purged the Siddhamātrikā and its offspring, Devanāgarī, of their irritating and unscientific characteristic of being an alphabet without pure consonants. Like the alphabet of their semitic ancestor, Aramaic, the imperial *lingua franca* of the Achaemenian empire that included Gandhār, eastern Afghānistān and northern Punjab in the pre-Christian era centuries, these alphabets i.e. kharoṣṭhī and Devanāgarī retained the 'a'-vowel sound as inherent in all consonants. As a result, the Sanskrit script, Devanāgarī, now held out officially as the model script for all current Indian vernaculars, is not alphabetic but semi-syllabic, of which grave defect and blemish the Gurmukhī script, as perfected by Guru Nānak, is happily free. It is these facts which are interpreted by various writers, to wit, that the Gurmukhī characters were invented by Guru Nānak,⁵ or, as is popular impression, that they were invented by Guru Angad himself. It was adoption of the Gurmukhī characters which—

reminded those who employed them of their duty towards their Guru and constantly kept alive in their minds the consciousness that they were something distinct from the common mass of the Hindus.⁶

To this nucleus of the *Granth* as prepared by Guru Angad, his successor Guru Amar Dās (1479-1574), added considerable material.

⁵ Forester, *Travels*, p. 257; Ahmed bin Mohammad Ali, "*Mirātul Ahwālī Jahānumā*" (MS.), 1810.

⁶ Gokal Chand Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, p. 48.

The post-partition Hindu-Sikh estrangement which has now gradually crystallised around the question of the Gurmukhī script, which the Hindus in the Punjab repudiate with such vociferous passion, becomes more comprehensible in the light of this assessment of the implications of the use of Gurmukhī script by the Sikhs in the past; the Gurmukhī script is the badge and guarantee of a distinct and separate Sikh entity and, thus, its prevalence and continuity is a hindrance to the much-desired final liquidation of Sikh identity.

But it was the fifth Nānak, Guru Arjun (1563-1606), who composed the major corpus of the *Granth*, as it now exists, and compiled the volume in 1604 after a stupendous labour of almost ten years. He then formally installed it in the central Sikh Temple at Amritsar after adding the following epilogue to it.

Three topics stand discussed in this Book :

The Truth, Human Concord with the Truth, and the Discriminatory Wisdom which leads to this Concord.

The First Principle of these topics is the ever-abiding Name of God, the All-Ground.

Whosoever shall understand and assimilate It, shall be saved.

It is of no passing, but is of perennial interest to Mankind, to be taken by them on heart with undying devotion.⁷

Hence-forth, Guru Arjun and his successors always took a lower seat for themselves than the Book, the *Granth*, whenever the two happened to be together.

It was in 1706 that the tenth and the last Guru, Gobind Singh, re-edited the whole *Granth* by,

completing the daily prayers, by addition of four hymns under *Sopurakh*, expunging certain un-authorised pieces which had crept in at the end in some copies, amending certain spellings here and there and so on.⁸

Tradition says that he reproduced the whole of the *Granth* from memory and dictated it to the amanuensis at Sābo Kī Talwāṇḍī or Damdameh Sahib, now in the Indian Punjab, when re-editing it, a prodigious feat of memory from the view-point of human normalcy,

⁷ ਬਾਲੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਤਿੰਨਿ ਵਸਤੂ ਪਈਓ ਸਤੁ ਸਤੋਖੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੋ।
ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਨਾਮੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਾ ਪਇਓ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਸਭਸੁ ਅਧਾਰੋ।
ਜੇ ਕੋ ਖਾਵੈ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਭੁੰਚੈ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਹੋਇ ਉਧਾਰੋ।
ਏਹ ਵਸਤੁ ਤਜੀ ਨਹ ਜਾਈ ਨਿਤ ਨਿਤ ਰਖੁ ਉਰਿਧਾਰੋ।

Mundāwani, M 5, GGS, p. 1429.

⁸ Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, V.I. pp. 75-76.

but by no means extraordinary for a man of consummate yogic skill, such as the Guru was. Nor is such a feat altogether unique or rare, for, as Chinese accounts confirm, the Kashmiri monk, Guṇavarman, who reached Nanking in A.D. 431, recited before the Sung Emperor, Wen, (A.D. 424-453) long Buddhist texts from memory. Another Kashmiri monk, Buddhayasas recited the entire *Dharmaguptavināya* before Chi'en Emperor, Yao H'sing (394-416), and, when the Emperor, in order to test his memory, asked him to learn an obscure Chinese medical text of 50,000 words, the monk two days later, recited the entire text without a single mistake.

This re-edited copy was then reverently and carefully preserved till its loss in the fearful carnage of the Sikhs, the waddā ghalūghārā, near Ludhiānā, in the Punjab, by Ahmed Shāh Abdālī, in 1762, but prior to it four copies were prepared from it to be preserved at the four High Seats of Sikh Authority, the Four Thrones : *Akāltaḥt*, Amritsar, *Sri Keśgarh-takht* Anandpur, *Takht Sāhib* Paṭnā, and *Hazūrsāhib-takht* Naṇḍer.⁹ Many more copies, no doubt, were made of this re-edited *Granth*, and it was before one such copy, at Naṇḍer, in Deccan in 1708 that Guru Gobind Singh, terminated human succession to the office of the Guru and established instead, the condominium of the *Granth*, the Book, and the *Panth*, the Order of the Khalsa, with the following declaration, which ever since, is recited at the conclusion of every congregational prayer, morning and evening, and on all occasions of public worship by the Sikhs :

The Order of the Khalsa was established as was the Command of God;

This is now the commandment for all the Sikhs :

Accept the *Granth* as the Guru;

Know Guru *Granth Ji* as the visible body of the Gurus.

⁹ These four *takhts* have been accepted, from the very beginning, as the true and genuine high seats of Sikh authority, by spontaneous and universal consensus, till recent times.

[Of late, another, namely Damdameh Sahib, has been added to this list as the 5th *Takht*—editors.]

He who hath a properly trained mind, shall find confirmation thereof in the contents of the Book itself.¹⁰

Eversince, the Sikhs recognise no human successor to the Gurus, and speak of *Guru Panth* and *Guru Granth* in the same breath, in whom the joint sovereignty of this as well as the other world rests till the end of Time. Every Sikh temple has the *Guru Granth* opened in its congregational hall, which is arranged as an oriental throne room. Likewise, every Sikh house of consequence has in it, set apart a private chapel, which is arranged in the fashion of a throne room, with the *Guru Granth* installed on a throne. On every occasion, where the Sikhs as such gather and meet for deliberations, prayer or other religious functions, a throne, with the *Guru Granth* installed on it, must be arranged. The *Guru Granth*, on all such occasions is wrapped and dressed in brocades, silks and other precious clothes symbolic of royalty, and when an attendant sits or stands behind the throne with the royal symbol of a *chauri*, a yak-tail, in hand, with five or more Sikhs before the throne, the visible Body of the Guru is recognised as present there, and every Sikh who then enters the Presence, must present a *nazr*, a donation of money or flowers or any other such customary offering before the throne in accordance with ancient oriental custom and must behave with due decorum in the throne room; and, as a rule, the main entrance of such a room or place is guarded by two or more attendants with silver or golden staffs in hands and inside the room, five or two able bodied, properly dressed, Sikhs with drawn swords, are to be in attendance on all formal occasions.

All this ceremonious paraphernalia is nothing more than the usual symbols of royalty, enjoying sovereign powers, familiar to the East from times immemorial and in this case also, it is intended to indicate no more. The whole scene and ceremonious atmosphere and conduct

¹⁰ ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੇ ਚਲਾਯੋ ਪੰਥ।
ਸਭ ਸਿੱਖਨ ਕੋ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ।
ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਕੋ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹਿ,
ਜਾ ਕੋ ਹਿਰਦਾ ਸੁਧ ਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮੈ ਲੇਹੁ॥

D.S., Sri Mukh Vak Patshāhi 10, p. 248.

[Note : "ਜਾ ਕੋ ਹਿਰਦਾ ਸੁਧ ਹੈ" is read as "ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੋ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਹੈ" also —editors]

are scrupulously designed to indicate to all and sundry that the Order of the Khalsa claims to be sovereign, *sui generis* and that he who barter away this sovereignty is a traitor and he who assumes it, instead, is a usurper. To infer from this anything different, as many have done, such as that the Sikhs "worship" their sacred book, or that the Sikhs are bibliolaters, is wholly unwarranted and misconceived.

What is the meaning of the declaration that 'the *Granth* is the Guru,' and 'the visible Body of the Guru,' and that 'the very contents of the Book bear testimony to this'?

That it was no new doctrine which Guru Gobind Singh propounded, is clear. In the *Granth*, itself the doctrine is repeatedly laid down and reiterated that 'the Revelation is the Guru and the Guru is the Revelation,' and that 'whosoever shall accept the Revelation of the Guru, shall behold the Guru himself.'¹¹ The Sikhs are bidden to 'accept the Revelation of the true Guru as true for ever and for ever, for it is God Himself who maketh the Guru utter it.'¹² It is explained that, "the Revelation of the Guru is the Light of the World; through it God's Grace descendeth into the human soul,"¹³ and that "the Guru's Statement abideth with the soul, as the water drowneth it not, the thief stealeth it not, and the fire consumeth it not".¹⁴ It is asserted that as "the Guru's Revelation pervadeth in the world, it redeemeth man through the Name of God."¹⁵ After explaining the Guru's Revelation thus, the

¹¹ ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਾਰੇ॥

ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ ਪਰਤਖਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ॥

Natnarayan Ast., M 4, GGS, p. 982.

¹² ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਣਹੁ

ਗੁਰਸਿਖਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪਿ ਮੁਹਹੁ ਕਢਾਏ॥

Gauri ki Var, M 4, Ibid., p. 308.

¹³ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਇਸੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਕਰਮਿ ਵਸੈ ਮਨਿ ਆਏ॥

Sri Rag, Ast., M 3, Ibid., p. 67.

¹⁴ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਬਚਨੁ ਬਸੈ ਜੀਅ ਨਾਲੇ॥

ਜਲਿ ਨਹੀ ਡੁਬੈ ਤਸਕਰੁ ਨਹੀ ਲੇਵੈ ਭਾਹਿ ਨ ਸਾਕੈ ਜਾਲੇ॥

Dhanāsrī, M 5, Ibid., p. 679.

¹⁵ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਰਤੀ ਜਗ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਇਸੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਹਰਿਨਾਮੁ ਪਾਇਦਾ॥

Mārū Solhe, M 3, Ibid., p. 1066.

Guru Granth identifies it with the *Śabad* which may mean, sound or testament. The *Śabad* (Skt. *Śabda*) in the sense of eternal and self-existent sound, conceived as the eternal Veda, is an old Indian notion, rather an ancient Aryan notion, for, it is found in Zoroastrianism where the *Mentha-spenta*, the holy Word, is said to be the soul of God.¹⁶ This sense of the *Śabad* is not analogous to the Western idea of 'Logos', which primarily means Divine Wisdom and, subsequently, in Christian theology, assumes the form that the word is an emanation, Son of God. The *Mīmāṃsā* doctrine of the eternal character of the Veda, which it seeks to identify with the four ancient Sanskrit texts, the *Chaturveda*, is a development of this dual sense of the *Śabad* interpreting the doctrine of the *Śabad* in its neo-platonic sense of Divine Wisdom, and primordial Sound, simultaneously. One development of Hindu thought, primary and more ancient, is the Indo-Iranian sense of *Śabad* being equivalent to primordial Sound on which the ancient doctrine of *mantra*, the word-magic, is based. The *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* identifies this *Śabad*, the primordial Sound with the Word *Om*; this immortal sound is the whole of this visible universe. It is thus as follows :

what has become, what is become, what will become, all of this is the sound *Om*. What is beyond these three states of the temporal world, that too is the sound *Om*.¹⁷

The doctrine of *mantra* which has permeated many Hindu vedic practices, and which gave rise to the *Mantrāyan* School of the later Mahāyān Buddhism, holds that—

There is associated with each object and each element of Nature and with each organic creature, sub-human, human and super-human, including the highest orders of deities. . . a particular rate of vibration. If this be known and formulated as sound in a *mantra*, and used expertly. . . it is capable of disintegrating the object or

¹⁶ *Yast.* 13.81; and *Vendidad*, 19.14.

¹⁷ *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* (V. 1). It is this text of *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* which is redacted in the *Guru Granth* as :

ਓਨਮ ਅਖਰ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ॥ ਓਨਮ ਅਖਰ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਸਾਰੁ॥

Ramkali, "Oankar", GGS, p. 930.

element of which it is the keynote, or, in vibratory accord, or in case of spiritual beings, of impelling the lesser deities and elementals to appear, and the superior deities to emit telepathically their divine influence.¹⁸

Both these doctrines of Śābad, the mantra doctrine and the Divine Wisdom doctrine, claim certain hymns of the Ṛgveda, pertaining to the goddess of speech *vach*¹⁹, as their authority. But in the Guru Granth, the second line of thought, which identifies Śābad with Divine Wisdom, which forms itself as God's Light in the consciences of man, is adopted and the first line of thought is discouraged as *abra cadabra*.²⁰

In explaining the sense of the Śābad, adopted therein, the *Guru Granth* avers that Śābad is that essence of things by understanding which man comprehends the truth and thus becomes one with Truth.

The Yogic believe that the gnosis to which their discipline leads is the Śābad. The priestly Brahmins think that Vedas constitute the *Sabad*. Warriors, Kshatriyas identify it with the spirit of valour and the labourers, the sudras, with that of service. But the *Sabad* is one and indivisible. Nanak salutes him who understands this secret, for that man is one with God.²¹

This Śābad, this secret Light, is dormant in the heart of every human being and it can be made manifest through a severe discipline of,

furnace of Self-control, goldsmith of patience, the envil of Intellect, the tools of true Science, the ignition of Fear of God, Fire of

¹⁸ W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibet's Great Yogi : Milarepa*, p. 37, fn. 2.

¹⁹ अहं सुवे पितरमस्य मूर्ध्नि-मयं योनिरप्सवन्तः समुद्रे ।
ततो वि तिष्ठे सुवनानु विप्रोतामूदयां वर्ध्वाणोप स्पृशामि ।

Rgveda X, 125.7.

²⁰ ਤੰਤੁ ਮੰਤੁ ਪਾਖੰਡੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ॥

Sūhi Rāg, M 1, *GGs*, p. 766.

²¹ ਜੋਗ ਸਬਦੰ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਬਦੰ ਬੇਦ ਸਬਦੰ ਤ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣਹ॥
ਖੜੀ ਸਬਦੰ ਸੂਰ ਸਬਦੰ ਸੂਦ੍ਰ ਸਬਦੰ ਪਰਾਕ੍ਰਿਤਹ॥
ਸਰਬ ਸਬਦੰ ਤ ਏਕ ਸਬਦੰ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਜਾਨਸਿ ਭੇਉ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਤਾ ਕੋ ਦਾਸੁ ਹੈ ਸੋਈ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਦੇਉ॥

Sloka Sahskriti, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 1353.

suffering and asceticism, and in the receptacle of Love, prepared this nectar everlasting. In such a true Mint, the coin of the *śabad* is thus struck. Nanak, [adds] the final Beautitude is through Grace.²²

He in whom this Light is fully manifest is the Guru.²³

Such a man is capable of helping others in discernment of this Light within themselves.²⁴

The moral human body is not to be deemed as the Guru; it is the Light within, that is the Guru. The Guide, the Mystery profound and inscrutable and it is the *Sabad*, the absence of which results in spiritual confusion of the world'.²⁵

This *Śabad*, the Light, is not variegated, contingent upon age and clime; 'it is one, for God is one and all that there is proceeds from God'.²⁶

'The search and discernment of this *Sabad* is the one effort worth making for man in this world; all else is waste and weariness'.²⁷

The *Śabad* is the subject explained in the revelations of the Sikh Gurus, which Guru Arjun compiled in the first corpus of the *Guru Granth*.

²² ਜਤੁ ਪਾਹਾਰਾ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਸੁਨਿਆਰੁ॥ ਅਹਰਣਿ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਦੁ ਹਬੀਆਰੁ॥
ਭਉ ਖਲਾ ਅਗਨਿ ਤਪ ਤਾਉ॥ ਭਾਂਡਾ ਭਾਉ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਢਾਲਿ॥
ਘੜੀਐ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ॥ ਜਿਨ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰਮੁ ਤਿਨ ਕਾਰ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲ॥

Japu, *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²³ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬਿੰਦੇ ਸੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਕਹੀਐ . . . ॥

Rag Malar, M 4, *GGs*, p. 1264.

²⁴ ਸਤਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਨਾਉ॥
ਤਿਸ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਿਖੁ ਉਧਰੈ . . . ॥

Gauri Sukhmani, *Ibid.*, p. 286.

²⁵ ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰਾ ਬਿਨ ਸਬਦੈ ਜਗੁ ਬਉਰਾਨੰ॥

Sorath Ast, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 635.

²⁶ ਏਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਏਕੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਵਰਤੇ ਸਭ ਏਕਸੁ ਤੇ ਉਤਪਤਿ ਚਲੈ॥

Prabhau, M 3, *Ibid.*, p. 1334.

²⁷ ਇਸੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਹੈ ਸਾਰ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਹੋਰੁ ਮੋਹੁ ਗੁਬਾਰੁ॥

Prabhau, M 5, *Ibid.*, p. 1342.

It is a treasure compared with which all the precious stones of the earth are worthless. Its worth cannot be computed, and it is never diminished. Let all men freely draw upon and expend it, for the more it is used, ampler it grows.²⁸

When in the first decade of the 17th century, the Sixth Nanak, Guru Hargobind (1595-1644) pointedly stressed the temporal and spiritual aspects of the Sikh Way of life simultaneously, the question arose of having a portrait of the Guru painted in his capacity as the secular head of the community. The Guru then once again made it clear that the moral frame of the Guru had no peculiar sanctity attached to it and that the Guru is the Sabad, the Divine Light, that is manifest in his heart and which he communicates to mankind.

The Sabad as revealed by the Guru is the only authentic portrait of the Guru.²⁹

In Hindu Epiistemology, as expounded in the *Nyayasutra* of Gautamrishi, four valid sources of knowledge are accepted, perception, inference, analogy and *Sabad*, by the last of which 'credible evidence' is meant. The Guru's word is credible testimony concerning the knowledge of things seen by him and unseen by the generality of men, the things of the spirit. The Guru's Word, his Revelations, is recorded in the *Guru Granth*, and the *Guru Granth*, therefore, is the *Sabad*, the Testament. This Testament is the Sikh doctrine, to which Guru Gobind Singh added nothing when he established the condominium of the *Guru Panth* and *Guru Granth*. Instead of appointing an individual successor to himself, he appointed instead the collective of the Order of the Khalsa for the future, and formally reiterated and recognised the true status of the *Granth*, which was

੨੮ ਘੀਉ ਦਾਦੇ ਕਾ ਖੋਲਿ ਡਿਠਾ ਖਜਾਨਾ॥ ਤਾ ਮੇਰੈ ਮਨਿ ਭਇਆ ਨਿਧਾਨਾ॥
ਰਤਨ ਲਾਲ ਜਾ ਕਾ ਕਛੂ ਨ ਮੋਲੁ॥ ਭਰੇ ਭੰਡਾਰ ਅਖੂਟ ਅਤੋਲੁ॥
ਖਾਵਹਿ ਖਰਚਹਿ ਰਲਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਭਾਈ॥ ਤੋਟਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਵਧਦੇ ਜਾਈ॥

Gauri, Chaupade, M 5, *Ibid.*, p. 186.

੨੯ ਗੁਰ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੈ . . .

Varān Bhai Gurdas, 24.11.

always conceded. *Guru Granth* contains a statement and exegesis of the Sikh doctrine concerning God, His nature, the Man and his relation to God, which later covers man's relation to his fellow men and other creatures. It contains perennial philosophy, uncontaminated by temporal and secular matters. It is not a code of ethical conduct or social organisation like semitic scriptures, though it strictly postulates a social context for practice of religion and enjoins strict, uncompromising and high-pitched ethical conduct, unamended by considerations of expediency or self-interest, and unbending on matters of principle.

(a) Listen and pay heed to what the Guru teaches. Good deed endures and there is no second chance to undo the evil done.^{30a}

(b) Do the good deed as it brings in sure merit.^{30b}

(c) Man creates much encumbrance on his soul by evil deeds that result from greed, avarice and flasehood.

And ah! this mortal frame of man have I seen often reduced to a heap of miserable garbage in a neglected corner.^{30c}

(d) The clever man says one thing and does another and the love that is missing in the heart he projects in words : but He, the all-knowing God, knoweth the truth.^{30d}

(e) True cleverness is in the good deed; mere lip service is sheer damage and loss.^{30e}

³⁰ (a) ਸੁਣਿ ਸੁਣਿ ਸਿਖ ਹਮਾਰੀ॥ ਸੁਕ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਕੀਤਾ ਰਹਸੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਜੀਅਤੇ ਬਹੁਤਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਵਾਰੀ॥

Gauri Guareri, M 1, GGS, pp. 154-55.

(b) ਸੋਈ ਕੰਮੁ ਕਮਾਇ ਜਿਤੁ ਮੁਖੁ ਉਜਲਾ॥

Asa, Kafi, M 5, *Ibid.*, p. 397.

(c) ਲਬੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਮੁਚੁ ਕ੍ਰੁਤੁ ਕਮਾਵਹਿ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਉਠਾਵਹਿ ਡਾਰੇ॥
ਤੂੰ ਕਾਇਆ ਮੇ ਰੁਲਦੀ ਦੇਖੀ ਜਿਉ ਧਰ ਉਪਰਿ ਛਾਰੇ॥

Gauri Guareri, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 154.

(d) ਰਹਤ ਅਵਰ ਕਛੁ ਅਵਰ ਕਮਾਵਤ॥ ਮਨਿ ਨਹੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਮੁਖਹੁ ਗੰਢ ਲਾਵਤ॥
ਜਾਨਨਹਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਪਰਬੀਨ॥ . . .

Gauri, Sukhmani, M 5, *Ibid.*, p. 269.

(e) ਜਹ ਕਰਟੀ ਤਹ ਪੂਰੀ ਮਤਿ॥
ਕਹਣੀ ਵਾਝਹੁ ਘਟੇ ਘਟਿ॥

Sri Rag, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 25.

It asserts again and again that there is no religious life on this earth, divorced from ethical conduct,³¹ and thus Sikhism is a fiercely ethical religion, unlike Hinduism, whose "deities are not identified with moral law and the saint is above that law."³² Nor, is it sectarian, laying down any metaphysical propositions in support of the practices of a sect or a religion. What it says is of universal import; it must be accepted, or may be rejected at one's own peril. There is no other claim that this Book makes, and there is no higher claim that any Revelation or Testament can make.

This status of the *Guru Granth* has remained unaffected throughout; only the temporal direction of human affairs was given a collegial and collective basis by Guru Gobind Singh.

The origins and the literary forms of the *Guru Granth* are not without Indian precedents. The ancient scriptures are, almost all of them, compilations and anthologies like the *Guru Granth*. *R̥gveda* is undoubtedly an anthology of hymns and thus, it forms, a prototype of the *Guru Granth*.

The *Bṛhadārṇyakopaniṣad* is admittedly a collection of philosophic doctrines propounded by various persons, having an element of coherency based on their acceptance by the *Taittirīya* School. The *Sutta Piṭaka* has an obvious composite character and the various *Nikāyas* can easily be seen as edited codifications of earlier and older texts, orally preserved. The semitic, Old and New Testaments, outside the Hindu and Buddhist scriptural range, are no exceptions, though, like the *Guru Granth*, they are partly, at least, compilations of personal documents and not editions and amplifications of earlier traditions and teachings. Nor, indeed, is the apparently excessive and high respect shown to a corpus of sacred literature, even bibliolatory, apparently similar to that witnessed in the case of the *Guru Granth*, unprecedented. The copies of *Nāmghoṣa* receive homage in Assam and the Mahāyānist tantric book, *Navratnagrantha*, is literally worshipped in Nepāl.

³¹ ਇਸੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਗੀ॥

Sorath, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 599.

³² Charles Eliot, Sir, I, p. XVI.

In the case of *Nāmghoṣa* and *Navratnagrantha*, it is undoubtedly bibliolatory, which is practised in Assam and Nepāl, while in the case of The *Guru Granth*, it is not the case.

As is well-known the Great Split in Islam took place immediately after the death of Mohammad (June 8, 632), during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr (632-634), and Qaramatians, the followers of 'Alī, sacked Meccā in A.D. 930. In A.D. 1258 when Hulāqū, the Mongol, captured and laid waste Baghdād, the Fatemids of Egypt assumed the pretensions, the status and the privileges of the sole caliph of Islam. The Ismailis of India, that is the wing of Muslims who owe primary allegiance to 'Alī, had penetrated into and occupied Sind and Multān as far back as the 9th century, and it was only during the early 11th century that they were crushed by Mahmūd of Ghaznā. The remnants of these Ismailis are found in the present day India as *Khojās* and *Bohrās*.

Hasan-bin-Sabbāh (d. 1124), that terrible religious leader of the Ismailis, who has given the word 'assasin' to the English language, had deputed Nūr Shāh alias Nūr Satgurū, to preach his partisan form of Islam in India in the 12th century. The latter, confined his religious conversion activities mainly to Gujarāt, and is regarded as their first leader, *dā'ī*, by the *Khojās* of India. Fifth or sixth in this succession of Ismaili muslim preachers, was Syed Imāmud-dīn, son of *Pīr* Syed Kabīrud-dīn (d. 1512), who introduced heterodox doctrines and practices in the Ismaili creed in India, such as abrogation of the obligation to pay one tenth of the income, '*ushr*', of each follower to the Ismaili pontiff, *imām*, in Egypt and, consequently, the reigning pontiff, *imāmi-waqt*, Aghā 'Abdus-salām excommunicated him, and, in order to safeguard against possible heterodoxies in future, discontinued the system of *pīrs*, the ordained preachers of Ismaili Islam, and instead compiled a book *Pandiyāti-jawānmardī*, 'the Manly Precepts', for the guidance of the Indian *Khojās*. This book is regarded as the *pīr* by the Indian followers of the pontiff of Ismailis, which furnishes a seeming parallel to the *Granth* as the Guru, though with fundamental differences. Firstly, the *Granth* is the Guru and not merely a deputy of the Guru as is the case with the 'book of directions' of the *Khojās*, the

authority of which is secondary and derivative, liable to be altered or abrogated from time to time by the *Imām-i-waqt*. Secondly, the *Granth* derives its validity and status from the ancient Hindu metaphysical doctrine of the *Śabad*, while the book-pir of the *Khojās* is merely a manual of human directions. And here the similarity between the book-pir and the *Guru Granth* ends. The concept of the primacy of the book over living human guidance which is the *raison d'être* of the Sikh doctrine of *Granth* as the Guru, is now progressively being accepted by the consensus of religious perception of mankind. As has been shown above, Hindus have been familiar with the true doctrine from times immemorial. In Islam also, there is a dim perception of this doctrine, as stated. In the Christian church also the central point, on which Protestant Lutheran revolt occurred in the 15th century, was insistence on the primacy of the Bible over the pretensions of the human Pope. Now, in the Catholic Christianity also, the point made out by Luther has been tacitly accepted. During the Vatican Council meetings at Rome, a few years ago, the Bible was invariably enthroned on the high altar of Peter daily, just as the Sikhs place the *Guru Granth* at the primary focal point of their religious congregations. The Sikh position on the subject of primary allegiance to and reverence for the Book, therefore, should no longer strike as either novel and strange or as smacking of bibliolatory.

But the extreme respect shown to the Hindu books in each case is sought to be justified by, what would strike as peculiar to a Western-educated mind—a theory which postulates that epistemology and ontology are, in the final analysis, one, that knowing is being.

This theory postulates that the knowledge which involves duality, a subject-object relation, is not true knowledge, it is not the knowledge of the Real, it is the knowledge of appearances, and, therefore, a relative knowledge. It is *dvandva*, the duality-knowledge, not certain and self-evident knowledge. Real knowledge, or the knowledge of the Real is *advandva*, without any subject-object relationship. There can be no sense of duality in the knowledge of the Real, which is One, without a second, *advaita*. Therefore, in true knowledge the subject and the object are both merged into a higher synthesis. True knowledge is union with the Real. As

the *Brahadaryakopanisad* says, (III. 7.23). "There is no seer beside him, nor hearer beside him, no perceiver beside him, no knower beside him,"³³ and thus of the Reality, there cannot be *dvandva* knowledge. In the *Guru Granth*, precisely this position is taken up with regard to the final unity of epistemology and ontology.

The quality and the quantity of Him cannot be stated, for, only that which is the other can be thus known and stated.³⁴

The knowledge, that is, knowledge of the Reality is an end and an existent and not a state relationship, or mode, and it is not a means to something else. One is not saved through knowledge, but it is more correct to say that true knowledge is itself emancipation.

'He who has true knowledge of God, is God Himself. This Hindu proposition has no parallel in the European thought, ancient or modern. It is tantamount to a repudiation of the ultimate validity of all knowledge, whether of Metaphysics or of empirical Sciences. It is not merely a denial of the centrality of knowledge as a form of human activity as held in some twentieth century philosophic trends in the West, such as extreme Vitalism of Bergson and Dewey's denial of the ubiquity of the knowing experience. It conceives of a human activity which involves a transmutation of the agent, in which "the agent, the activity and the object are realised as one."³⁵ It is such knowledge of the Real to which the name of *Prajnapamitta* is given in the Mahayana Buddhism. The Mahayana scripture which professes to deal with the knowledge of the Real, is also called, *Prajnapamitta*. It consists of two hundred thousand verses and is believed to have been given to the world through the discourses of Gautam, the Buddha, on the Gridhakuta at Rajgrha. The word *Prajna* is etymologically related to the Greek, *prognosis*, implying knowledge of things not derived empirically from things themselves, but knowledge, as distinguished from *sanjna*,

³³ नान्योऽतोऽस्ति द्रष्टा नान्योऽतोऽस्ति श्रोता

नान्योऽतोऽस्ति मन्त्रा नान्योऽतोऽस्ति विज्ञातृष

Bṛhadāmyakopanisad, III. 7.23.

³⁴ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਜਾਇ॥ ਦੁਸਰ ਹੋਇ ਤ ਸੋਝੀ ਪਾਇ॥

Gauri, Sukhmani, M 5, GGS, p. 294.

³⁵ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਆਪਿ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ . . . ॥

Ibid., p. 274.

empirical knowledge by observation. This *prajñā* has been given a visible form in Buddhist iconography, plastic arts and sacred paintings through some most beautiful visual artistic expressions. The Singsari, Java, sculpture of *Prajñāpārmittā* of the 13th century is a most perfect example of this expression, extant. It shows a woman of serene beauty sitting *padmāsana* on a lotus seat in the *vitarkamudrā*, gesture, with a lotus stem supporting a book on its flower-bud sprouting from her left arm.

This radiant form represents the indestructible hidden nature of all and everything, devoid of differentiating and of limiting or bedimning qualities.³⁶

The lotus symbol is derived from the Hindu tradition, and belongs, specially, to goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī, one of whose names, Kamala, means "lotus" and who is depicted, commonly among lotus flowers. She represents earthly fulfilment and bliss, whereas *Prajñāpārmittā*, her Buddhist counterpart, represents the fulfilment and bliss of the transcendental sphere, which is attained by shattering fetters of earthly bondage, transcending the passion-ridden ignorance of our limited, individualised modes of existence, and going, in realisation, beyond the phenomenal illusion of the personality in its surrounding world.³⁷

The Sikh tradition would consider the book, as shown in this Singsari sculpture, as its most significant part, it being the real corpus of the Transcendental Wisdom, the *Prajñāpārmittā*. And in this the Sikh tradition follows the primitive Buddhist acceptance of the identity of Buddha's Word with the essence of the Buddha, shorn of the latter Mahayanist exuberances.

'It may be, Ananda', were the last words of Gautam, the Buddha, before passing away into *Mahāparinivāna*, 'that some of you will think, the word of the Teacher is ended, we have no teacher. But it is not to be regarded thus. The Dhamma taught and laid down by me, this is to be the Teacher, after my passing on.'³⁸

³⁶ Heinrich Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, I, p. 140.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, I, pp. 141-142.

³⁸ *Dīghanikāya*, II, 154-155.

This is precisely the doctrine laid down in the *Guru Granth* by the earlier Sikh Gurus, latter reiterated by Guru Gobind Singh, when he hailed the *Granth* as the *Guru Granth*, the repository of Transcendental Wisdom, "the visible Body of the Guru". This transcendental Wisdom in its essence is the God and Godhead both, and in its sensible aspect is the Word of Wisdom, the Word of the Guru :

Hail, hail, the Word of the Guru for, It is the Formless God Himself, and there is nothing else comparable to it.³⁹

Thus the *Guru Granth*, the Book, as containing the Word of the Guru, the Transcendental Wisdom, as expressed in meaningful sounds, is clearly "the visible Body of the Guru" as Guru Gobind Singh declared.

The reverence which is shown to the *Guru Granth* by the Sikhs is not bibliolatory, for, they do not worship any forms or images. It is the visible Body of all the Gurus, for it is a perceivable record of the Transcendental Wisdom; and the collective entity of the *Panth* in synarchy with the *Guru Granth* is invested with *sui generis* sovereignty temporal and spiritual, both.

If a deity is defined as an immortal god, while a divinity as that mortal entity which possess divine qualities, then we may say that the *Granth* is a divinity, but not a deity, and thus it cannot be and is not an object of worship by the Sikhs, though seemingly extreme reverence is shown to it by them as "the visible Body of the Guru", and oriental formal homage is paid to it, as it is symbolic of the Sikh sovereignty.

³⁹ ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥

Gujari ki Var, M 3, GGS, p. 515.

CHAPTER VIII

PARTHENOGENESIS

Parthenogenesis in Biology means, reproduction without sexual union, a form of life in which the mother principle of Creation has not sought or accepted the aid of male-principle. *Parthenos* in Greek means, virgin, non-united with the opposite end of the bipolarity of the process of creation, and parthenogenesis, therefore, signifies a basically new quality of life, not a reproduction, but a new production outside the evolutionary chain of emergent or creative evolution. The myth of the virgin-birth of Jesus Christ is intended to signify just this unique aspect of Jesus, a new Form of life, which is neither reproduced nor emerges out of antecedents, but is an act of new and unique creation. It is not merely a development of novelty in the course of natural evolutionary process, which continually throws up new qualities which were not present in any of the antecedents from which the entity possessing the qualities sprang, an idea or a body of speculative doctrine that has acquired a vogue in the West through Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah*, and certain works of H.G. Wells and the philosophic theories advanced by Professor Lloyd Morgan, Bergson and Samuel Butler. It is something of which Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) had a vague premonition earlier,¹ when he conceived of his "Superman" as a new species, rather than as the superior individual arising precariously out of human mediocrity, as he came to hope later.

Seven centuries earlier, *mevlānā* Jelālud-dīn Rūmī (1207-1273) had a similar dream, a hope and faith that out of the current uninspiring

¹ "Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman, a rope over an abyss . . . What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal."

Thus Spake Zarathustra, 1.4.

mediocrity of man might arise a superior and wholly new human species that is outside the natural evolutionary progression :

Yesterday, in broad day light, the holy Sheikh roamed through-out the town with a lighted lamp in hand,

Saying: I am bored to death with these creeping hopping creatures around me and I look for a real genuine man.

I am truly disgusted with the sight of my sluggish lethargic torpid fellow men :

I long to see the man with the incandescent clarity of gods within and the strength of titans in his muscles.'

And thus I addressed the holyman :

'Sire, I too have made a thorough search as you are making, but there is no such thing as you look for.'

To which the Sheikh rejoined : 'Precisely so; I search for him who is not there to be found.'²

It is this concept of an act of unique creation, of a parthenogenetic birth of a unique species which is adumbrated in the ancient Hindu myth of Churning of the Ocean, *Samudramanathan*. In the ancient Hindu texts³ it is stated that, once upon a time, in the mutatory epoch of Creation, the gods and the titans, both became bored with the countless nonillions of forms of life and matter, and to relieve their ennui, formed a cooperative amongst themselves to churn the primeval ocean, the Matrix of all forms and species of Life and Matter,

²

دی شیخ با چراغ مسمی گشت گرد شهر
 که دام و زد ملولم و انعامم از دست
 فریاد مملویم شدت عذابم در دست
 غنیو شدا و در دستم و در دستم از دست
 گفتیم که با تو نیست من نبود جسد المم ما
 گفتیم که با تو نیست من نبود جسد المم ما

³ Mahabharata, I, 17, ff. ; Vishnupurana, 1,9., Matsyapurana, CCXLIX, 13, 38.

and for this purpose prevailed upon the heavenly mountains, *Mandāra*, to agree to be used as the churning rod, and the Endless Snake, *Anantanāga* the Spirit of the primeval Ocean, as the churning string. This churning, a scene depicted in sculptures of truly grand dimensions of the world-famous East gallery of Angkor Wat of Cambodia,⁴ (early 12th century), lasted for a thousand years and it was then that from the foams of the Cosmic Ocean, there emerged the unique form of Śrī-Lakṣmī, the goddess of Beauty, Purity and Plenty, for whom the god Viṣṇu immediately staked his claim, which, happily none contested.

The *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (VIII.8.18) thus describes her :

Holding in her hand a lotus garland round which hummed the bees, she turned her gracious face made lovely by the smile of modesty, and against whose cheeks sparkled beautiful ear-rings; her two breasts perfectly matched and close together, were covered with powdered sandal-wood and saffron, her waist was so slight that it was scarcely visible; her every step was accompanied by the tuneful jingle of the anklets which adorned her feet, and her whole body was like a golden liana.⁵

Thus, one by one, Fourteen Jewels, ten and four unique parthenogenetic objects of creation, emerged out of the milky white Cosmic Ocean, the *kṣīrāsāgara*, the last object thus to emerge being the Nectar of Immortality, *Amṛita*.⁶ These fourteen 'Jewels', include *Uchchaiśrava*, the royal horse, *Kāmadhenu*, the evermilch cow, *Kalpavṛkṣa* the

⁴ In a gilded mural, basso-rillievo, inside the Sikh holy *sculpture*. *Baba Aṭal Sahib* at Amritsar also this mythological scene is beautifully depicted.

⁵ स्तनद्वयञ्जाति कृशोदरी समं निरन्तरं चन्दन कुङ्कुमोक्षितम् ।

ततरततो नूपुरबल्लु शिञ्जितैर्विशपती हेमलतेव सा अमौ ।।

ततः कृतस्वस्त्यनोत्पलस्रजं नदद्विरेफा परिगृह्यपाणिना ।

वचाल वक्रं सुकपोल कुण्डलं सङ्गीडहासं दधती सुशोभनम् ।। *agavatapurāṇa*, VIII. 8. 17-18.

⁶ a) ਰਤਨ ਉਪਾਇ ਧਰੇ ਖੀਰੁ ਮਥਿਆ . . .

Asa, M 1, GGS, p. 350.

b) ਮਿਲਿ ਦੇਵ ਅਦੇਵਨ ਸਿੰਧ ਮਥਯੋ । . .

ਤਬ ਰਤਨ ਚਤੁਰ ਦਸ ਯੋ ਨਿਕਸੋ ।

Bachitranatak, DG, p. 160.

wishfulfilling tree, *Rambhā*, the celestial dancer, *Kālkūṭa*, the deadly poison, *Surā* or wine that makes men and antigods feel like gods, *Chandra*, the Moon, *Dhanvantr*, the divine medicine-man, *Pāñchjanya* the horrisonant conchshell war-bugle, *Kaustabha*, the auspicious precious stone, *Sāranga*, the death-dealing arrow-bow, *Airāvata*, the white regal elephant besides the "Jewel" that came up first, *Śrī-Lakṣmi*, and the "Jewel", that came up last, *Amrita*.

It is this last "Jewel", the *Amrit*, which possesses the potency of making all those, who partake of it, into immortals; all the other "Jewels", though unique and once-for-all-time objects of creation, lack the potency of transmutation, fissionable multiplication or genetic continuity. It was for the possession of this "Jewel", therefore, that a fierce contest arose between the gods and the titans and if the former emerged out victorious in the end, it certainly was not wholly because of their valour or chivalry; strategy and statecraft played a decisive role in this fearful struggle.

The mighty episode which decided as to who would dominate the world for the period of the current World-cycle, the *Kalpa*, occurred in the sixth *manvantra*, the subdivision of the fourteen such subdivisions of the current *Kalpa*. A *Kalpa* is equal to a single day of the demiurge creator Brahma, in which the universe is created out of the Unmanifest Absolute, becomes, and then is reabsorbed into the Absolute for a period of another *Kalpa*, the night of Brahma. Each *Kalpa* has fourteen *manvantras*, as already stated, and in each *manvantra* the creatures are born and evolved to be submerged into a Deluge, when on the remnants of this *manvantra*, a new *manvantra* arises and soon, with a recurrent periodicity. Each *Kalpa* consists of one thousand *Mahāyugas*, the Great Ages, and each *Mahāyuga* consists of four *Yugas*, synchronous with the progressive decline of virtue and excellence of the Creation, beginning with the *Kṛita* or *Satyuga* and ending with the *Kaliyuga*, and these World-ages, or *Yugas* have a span of 1,728,000 years, 1,296,000 years, 864,000 years and 432,000 years respectively, with a grand total of 4,320,000 years of human reckoning. Thus a *kalpa* is equal to 4,320,000,000 years, as the mortals count time.

The present age is that of *Kaliyuga*, which according to *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, commenced with the demise of the 8th incarnation of Viṣṇu, Lord Kṛṣṇa at midnight of 17/18 February, 3102 B.C. This tallies with the movements of a certain star-configuration called, *saptarṣichār*, that when the sevenstars, *saptarṣi*, were in the lunar asterism, *maghā*, 0°, the first point of Aries, *meṣa* was in 8° of *rohinīnakṣatra* which is about 71° from the present *sāyana* progressed position of Aries, giving its epoch as more than 5000 years old.

Such are the ancient accounts in the temporal context of which the *Amrit* was extracted by a joint project executed by the gods and the titans, in the remote periods of pre-History, through the churning of the Cosmic Ocean.

The Cosmic Ocean is Water which is the primary materialisation and symbol of Maya, the Impulse of the Formless Absolute, from which and through which all Phenomena emanate and arise. 'It is the life-generating element which circulates through Nature, in the form of sap, milk and blood, and it, therefore, is the primary form of life.'⁷ To water all forms of life owe their origin, by water are they maintained and sustained, and the fecund water-womb receives back into itself the ashes of all the creations at the time of the dissolution of the Creation. Water is the Womb of Creation, and the Grave of all dissolved forms. It is formless and unfathomable, and the primary Stuff or Protyle of all Creation.

From the All-Reality proceeds subtle, intangible air, *pavana*, and *pavana* gives rise to tangible water, *jala*. Out of water was all creation brought forth by impregnating Light in each and every individuated form.⁸

The water is the Cosmic Abyss. It represents the Universal Consciousness the Mind-Stuff, which Āsaṅga in his *Mahāyāna-sūtralankāra* calls *alaya-vijñāna*, superindividual Consciousness,

⁷ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਜੀਉ ਹੈ ਜਿਤੁ ਹਰਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਇ॥

Āsā, M 1, GGS, p. 472.

* ਸਾਚੇ ਤੇ ਪਵਨਾ ਭਇਆ ਪਵਨੈ ਤੇ ਜਲੁ ਹੋਇ॥

ਜਲ ਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭੁਵਨੁ ਸਾਜਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸੋਇ॥

Sri Rag, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 19.

which contains the germs of all potentialities and actualities, and is the subtle ubiquitous element the *ākāśa*. Out of such a Fluid of Life alone could the gods and the titans extract new and unique organic and inorganic objects of Creation, and *Amrita* is the last and the best of such objects lying dormant in the Alogical Immanence of the Cosmic Ocean. *Amrit* is the only object which possesses the powers of transmutation, and immortalisation and which endures beyond the World Ages, beyond the Time-Cycles and beyond the Kalpas.

It is this *Amrit*, some such immortal and immortalising potency alone, which is the final hope of mankind, in all the ages, times without end, and it was this *Amrit* which the Guru re-discovered and brought to the mankind, the *Amrit* of communion and union with God.

O, my mind, *Amrita* is the Name of God in the heart of man and such an *Amrita* is the central doctrine of Sikhism. Egocentricity is the basic illusion, the poison causing death and *Amrita* is the complete cure and antidote of this poison.

Thus is the dead-wood of human soul transmuted into living green shoots through communion with the Name of God.⁹

The Mystery of baptism of the Pure Steel, the mystic rite of stirring water with the double-edged sword of creation-destruction potency by the Five Beloved Ones who represent the mankind, by which a Sikh is knighted into a Singh and thus enrolled as a member of the Order of the Khalsa, which Mystery Guru Gobind Singh promulgated, is precisely this, that mankind can only be saved through the uniquely regenerative act of communion and union with God on earth, giving birth to a new life-impulse and ferment in the human Society, releasing ever-expanding forces of love and service and strength, to form the basis of a new heaven on earth.

* ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੁਤੀਏ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪਾਏ ਰਾਮ॥
ਹਉਮੈ ਮਾਇਆ ਬਿਖੁ ਹੈ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੁਤੀਏ ਹਰਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਬਿਖੁ ਲਹਿ ਜਾਏ ਰਾਮ॥
ਮਨੁ ਸੁਕਾ ਹਰਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੁਤੀਏ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਏ ਰਾਮ॥

Rag Bihāgrā, Chhant, M 4, GGS, p. 538.

Baptism of the Double-edged Sword is the key to easement of the complexities and pains of life.¹⁰

Humble salutations to the Guru again and again, a hundred times a day.

For, the Guru transmutes men into gods instantaneously.¹¹

This is the meaning and significance of stirring water with a double-edged sword for preparing the *Amrit*.

¹⁰ ਪੀਵਹੁ ਪਾਹੁਲ ਖੰਡੇਧਾਰ ਹੁਇ ਜਨਮ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ॥

Varan Bhai Gurdas (II), 41.

¹¹ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਦਿਉਹਾੜੀ ਸਦ ਵਾਰ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਮਾਣਸ ਤੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਕੀਏ ਕਰਤ ਨ ਲਾਗੀ ਵਾਰ॥

Var Asa, M 1, GGS, pp. 462-63.

CHAPTER IX

A SIKH AND A SINGH

It is commonly believed that Guru Nānak "described himself simply as a guru or teacher and his adherents as Sikhs or disciples,"¹ and that "Sikh (Sanskrit, *śiṣya*), means a disciple."² Earlier, we have shown that the concept 'Guru' is one of the most complex concepts of Hindu philosophy and ancient Indian religious thought, and that the ontological status of the Guru is by far the highest known to Hindu philosophical tradition of mankind. In the ancient Hindu texts, "the Guru is the demiurge Creature, Viṣṇu, the Preserver and Maheśvara, the All-Destroyer : Guru is the visible, the one and only God and is thus entitled to humble allegiance and adoration of all mankind."³ "The Guru is the earth and the Law above it from which each man receives his deserts!"⁴ "The Guru is the Cosmic Ocean",⁵ out of which all phenomena emanate and arise, of Hindu metaphysics, "The Guru is the running fresh Water of Life itself which continuously creates, refreshes, purifies and sustains the Life."⁶ There was, thus, nothing 'simple', modest or unassuming in the claim to the status of the Guru, which Nānak made, though he was extremely humble when he spoke

¹ Charles Eliot, Sir, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, II, p. 267.

² Teja Singh & Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, p. 1.

³ ਗੁਰੂਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਗੁਰੂਪ੍ਰਸਾਦੀ ਗੋਸਟੀਓਤਰ : ।

ਗੁਰੂ : ਸਾਥਾਤ੍ਪਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਰਸਮੈ ਸ਼੍ਰੀਗੁਰੂਦੇਵਸ : ॥

⁴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਧਰਤੀ ਧਰਮ ਹੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੇਹਾ ਕੇ ਬੀਜੇ ਤੇਹਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਏ॥

Gauri ki Vār, M 4, GGS. p. 302.

⁵ ਸੇਵਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਮੁੰਦੁ ਅਥਾਹਾ॥

Marū, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 1043.

⁶ ਗੁਰੁ ਦਰੀਆਉ ਸਦਾ ਜਲੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਮੇਲੁ ਰਹੈ॥

ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਪੂਰਾ ਨਾਵਟੁ ਪਸੁ ਪਰੇਤਹੁ ਦੇਵ ਕਰੈ॥

Prabhati, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 1329.

of himself as a human being and he preached humility as a necessary virtue for a man of culture and religion.

I belong to the lowly caste of those whose duty is to sing praises in the royal court.⁷

It is befitting for man to be humble and to say so, and thus beseech God to show mercy to the fallen and the unworthy.⁸

I possess neither the distinction of learning nor the merit of virtue and nor the just pride of holy penance; I am just a simple fool as I was born.⁹

In the final reckoning he who is most humble, shall be exalted the most.¹⁰

O, man, if you have your true interests at heart then be humble and unassuming, living a life of purity.¹¹

He, the Guru, therefore, is not a "teacher" of inert facts, and those whom He regenerates, are not merely the Sanskrit *śiṣya*, the taught and the pupils, "the disciples", or the followers. They are a class apart from the rest of mankind by virtue of their regenerated character, and not on account of their nominal allegiance to a human teacher.

As the *Rudrayāmaltantra* tells us, 'a guru is not one who merely teaches and preaches, but one who establishes the pupil into God-realisation, the guru's own status', *svayamācharate śiṣyamāchāre sthāpyapi*.¹²

Nor, indeed is the word, "Sikh" a corrupted form of the Sanskrit *śiṣya* as is generally supposed, for the word *Sikh* is a technical term

⁷ ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਕਾ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਹੋਰ ਉਤਮ ਜਾਤਿ ਸਦਾਇਏ॥

Var Asā, M 1, GGS, p. 468.

⁸ ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਮ ਨੀਚ ਕਰੰਮਾ॥ ਸਰਣਿ ਪਰੇ ਕੀ ਰਾਖਹੁ ਸਰਮਾ॥

Asā, M 5, Ibid., p. 12.

⁹ ਨ ਹਉ ਜਤੀ ਸਤੀ ਨਹੀ ਪਤਿਆ ਮੂਰਖ ਮੁਗਧਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਭਇਆ॥

Asā, M 1, Ibid., p. 12

¹⁰ ਧਰਿ ਤਾਰਾਜੂ ਤੋਲੀਐ ਨਿਵੈ ਸੁ ਗਉਰਾ ਹੋਇ॥

Var Asā, M 1, Ibid., p. 470.

¹¹ ਜੋ ਲੋੜਹਿ ਚੰਗਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਕਰਿ ਪੁੰਨਹੁ ਨੀਚੁ ਸਦਾਈਐ॥

Ibid., p. 465.

¹² स्वयमाचरते शिष्यमाचारे स्थाप्यय॥

which occurs in the Pali Dhammapada with clear definition of its denotation. Indeed, the Sanskrit *śiṣya* appears to be an artificial extraction made by Paṇini or his predecessor purists, from the original, older and richer Pāli 'Sikh'. To define Sikh with reference to the word *śiṣya*, is, therefore, a mistake, as serious as to consider that a 'Sikh' means no more than an adherent of a human teacher, Nānak.

Who shall be the victor in the race of life, the path of which is beset with evil and suffering ? Who shall achieve the life everlasting and thus garner the flowers of life on earth ?^{12a}

asks the *Dhammapada*. In the next verse, the answer is supplied to these far-reaching fundamental questions :

The Sikh shall be the victor in the race of life, the path of which is beset with evil and suffering. The Sikh shall achieve the life everlasting and thus shall garner the flowers of life on earth.¹³

For the Buddhist the *Dhamma*, the Lex Aeterna¹⁴ is synonymous with Truth.¹⁵ Sikhism also endorses this doctrine : Dharma is one and for all : it is the Truth.¹⁶ It is with this, timeless and temporal, transcendent and immanent Law that the Buddha identifies himself. "He who sees the *Dhamma* sees me and he who sees me sees the *Dhamma*,"¹⁷ a doctrine also explicitly stated in the *Guru Granth*. A

^{12a} को इमं पठवि विजेस्सति

यमलोक च इमं सदेवकं

को धम्मपदं सदेसित

कुसलो पुम्फमिवप्पचेस्सति ।

Puṣpavaggo, 4.1.

¹³ सेखो पठवि विजेस्सति

यमलोवरच इदं सदेवकम्

सेखा धम्मपदं सुदेसितं

कुसलो पुप्फमिवप्पचेस्सति

Ibid., 4.2.

¹⁴ "The Law above our minds, called the Truth"—St. Augustine, *Dev Ver reliq* XXX.

¹⁵ *Samyutta-nikaya*, 1.69.

¹⁶ ऐक्ये परमं दृष्टै प्रचु वेष्टी॥

Basant Ast, M 1, GGS, p. 1188.

¹⁷ धम्मं हि सो भिक्खवे, भिक्खु न पस्सति

धम्मं अपस्सन्तो न मं पस्सति ।

Ittiyuttkam, 3,43.45/91.

person who is dedicated to this Truth is a Sikh, a '*Sekhio*', as the Pālī Canon puts it. "A Sikh is one who travels towards the House of Truth that the Guru hath built."¹⁸

The word *Sikh* in its primitive sense, as well as the sense in which it is understood to mean in the Sikh scriptural writings and tradition, means an individual who values Truth above all things of the world and who dedicates his life in commitment to this Truth. Those who accept and follow the teachings of the Sikh Gurus naturally belong to this category, and quite appropriately, therefore, they are called, the Sikhs.

Why did Guru Gobind Singh call a Sikh a *Singh* when knighted as a member of the Khalsa ? The authors of *A Short History of the Sikhs*, simply, state that the knighted Sikhs "were to have a common name, *Singh*, or lion. Bravery as much as peace and purity was to be their religion."¹⁹ According to this, physical bravery, henceforth, was to be the main Sikh virtue, and therefore, Guru Gobind Singh, in 1699, required the Sikhs to adopt the surname of *Singh*, which means, 'lion', the feline beast of the Indian jungle. A Sikh writer of the early 19th century, Bhūp Singh Nirmalā says that the appellation, "Singh, was a gift from the vehicle of the goddess, *Chandi*, the Fierce."²⁰ In the myth of the goddess *Chandi*, also her determinant vehicle, the lion, is the representative of her animal nature, the Valour.

This appreciation of the word 'Singh', is as mistaken as has been seen to be the popular notion about the word 'Sikh'. The term 'Singh', as a term of religious and spiritual significance, is as ancient as the Hindu religion itself, and there is nothing earthly in its connotation as our various writers would have us believe.

"Monks", says Gautam, the Buddha, "the lion, king of beasts at eventide comes forth from his lair. Having done so, he stretches himself and then surveys the four quarters in all directions. He

¹⁸ ਮੇ ਬਧੀ ਸਚੁ ਧਰਮਸਾਲ ਹੈ॥ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾ ਲਰਦਾ ਭਾਲਿ ਕੈ॥

Sri Rāg, M 5, GGS, p. 73.

¹⁹ Teja Singh & Ganda Singh, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 70.

²⁰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਰਨ ਨੈ ਦੀਓ॥

Sudharmamārga Granth, p. 47.

then three times roars his lion's roar, *singhanāda* and sallies forth in search of prey. Why doth he do so? He roars with the idea : Let me not bring destruction to tiny creatures wandering astray. As for the word 'lion', monks, that is a term for a Truth-finder, *tathāgata*, a Perfected one, *pūranpuruṣa*, a fully awakened One, *buddha*. For, in as much as he teaches *dhmma* publicly, this is his lion's roar, the *singhanāda*."²¹

What is a Truth-finder, a *tathāgata*, the generic name for which is, a 'lion', a *Singh* ?

The Bhikkhu, Vachagotta asks Gautam, the Buddha, where a monk, when he is freed in heart, i.e. when he becomes a *tathāgata*, 'a lion', arises. The Buddha replies :

Arise, does not apply.

Then he does not arise?

Not -arise does not apply.

Then he both arises and does not arise?

Arises-and-not-arises does not apply.

Then he neither arises, nor does not arise?

Neither-arises-nor-does-not-arise does not apply.

I am at a loss, Gautam, I am bewildered.

You ought to be at a loss and bewildered Vacha, for this *dhmma* is hard to see and to understand, it is rare, excellent, beyond dialectic, subtle to be comprehended by the intelligent. To you it is difficult, who have other views, another persuasion, another belief, a different allegiance, a different teacher. So, I will question you in turn. If there were a fire burning in front of you, would you know it?

Yes, good Gautam.

If you were asked what made it burn could you give an answer?

21 सीहो भिक्खवे गिराजा सायन्हसमयं आसया निक्खमति आसया निक्खमित्वा विजम्भति ।

विजम्भित्वा समन्ता चतुदिसा अनुविलोकेति । समन्ता चतुदिसा अनुविलोकेत्वा तिक्खुत्तुं

सीहनादं नदति । तिवेखत्तं सीहनादं नदित्वा गोचराय पक्वमिति ।

Anguttara-nikaya, V/33 4.4.3.

I should answer that it burns because of the fuel of the grass and sticks.

If the fire were put out, would you know that it had been put out?

Yes.

If you were asked in what direction the put-out fire had gone whether to the east, west, north or south, could you give an answer?

That does not apply. Since the fire burnt because of the fuel of grass and sticks, yet because it received no more sustenance in the way of grass and sticks, then, lacking sustenance it went out.

In the same way, Vacha, all material shapes, feelings, perceptions, constructions, consciousness, by which a 'Truth-finder' might be made known have been destroyed by him, cut off at the root, made like the stump of a palm tree, so utterly done-away with that they can come to no future existence. A 'Truth-finder' is freed from the denotation of 'body', and so on, he is profound measureless, unfathomable even like unto the great ocean.²²

A Singh is one who has reached the goal, who has realised the Self, and whose self, therefore, is no more, whose ego and little personality are shed off and destroyed, and who thus has no proper particular name and so is designated by the generic term, Singh, so long as he is active in the social and political context of the Sikh Way of life. The term 'Sikh' implies a person who is a learner, who is set on the path of spiritual perfection and Self-realisation, but who has not yet fully realised the Self, who has not yet found the Truth in entirety, and who, therefore, cannot be designated a *tathāgata*, or a Singh. When a Sikh has reached that final goal and he has ceased acting with the fulcrum of his little ego, he becomes a Singh, the perfected one. Guru Gobind Singh has, said so :

A member of the Khalsa, a Singh, is one who is in constant communion with the living God, without a thought of the other, who is an embodiment of pure love and faith, . . . and within whom

²² *Majjhima-nikaya*, I, 486-487.

This is the true significance of the institute of Guru Gobind Singh by which he gave the surname 'Singh' to all the Sikhs, who were knighted as members of the Khalsa, and this is the real meaning of the term Singh in the Sikh religious tradition. Either with physical valour or with the symbology of the Śākta goddess, *Chandi*, the word Singh has nothing to do, so far as the Sikh tradition is concerned.

ਪੁਰਨ ਜੋਤ ਜਗੈ ਘਟ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਖਾਲਸ ਤਾਹਿ ਨਖਾਲਸ ਜਾਨੈ॥

Swayye 33, *DG*, p. 712.

At another place Guru Gobind Singh draws a similar distinction between the word *Sikh* and its antithesis "non-Sikh", when he prays to God to help him in the fulfilment of the mission which God has assigned to him. "Now, extend Thy help to me, O, God, by sustaining the Sikhs and destroying the non-Sikhs," and in the next verse the Guru explains the meaning of the term, "non-Sikh", and says that they are, "those who have evil minds, who are intent upon trouble-making, and who are enemies of religion :"

ਅਬ ਰੱਛਾ ਮੇਰੀ ਤਮ ਕਰੋ॥ ਸਿੱਖਤ ਉਬਾਰਿ ਅਸਿੱਖਤ ਸੰਘਰੋ॥

ਦਸਟ ਜਿਤੇ ਓਠਵਤ ਓਤਪਾਤਾ॥ ਸਕਲ ਮਲੇਛ ਕੋਰ ਰਣਘਾਤਾ॥

Benanti Chaupai, DG, p. 1387.

CHAPTER X

THE CHURCH AND THE STATE

In *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Volume I, the excellent chronological arrangement of the early Sikh history, of which we have acknowledged by frequently drawing on its pages, the learned authors make a most amazing statement about the Sikh doctrine of the Church and the State inter-relationship, which is wholly unwarranted and which is pernicious in the extreme. On page 65, they observe that, round about the winter of 1695, i.e. about three years before Guru Gobind Singh ordained the Order of the Khalsa, there,

seems to have been brought about some kind of understanding between the Government and the Guru who made the following significant statement recorded in the *Bachitranātak* (XIII.9.) :

'The house of Baba (Nānak) and of Babur both derive their authority from God Himself. Recognise the former as supreme in religion, and the latter supreme in secular affairs.'

Now, neither the context hints at any such "understanding", nor the text is susceptible to the translation or interpretation which the learned authors have made of it here. Nor, the whole Sikh history or Sikh doctrine lend any countenance to the doctrine of ultimate and mutually exclusive dichotomy of the Church and the State, the disintegrate condominium of God and Caesar, with the implied or express religious commandment to render unto Caesar the things that belong to Caesar. The whole idea is wholly foreign to the Sikh tradition and the Sikh teachings.

Let us examine the text first, and then its context to see whether there is anything there to indicate this supposed "understanding", the principle of which is apparently interpreted by the learned authors as a mutually exclusive dominium over man's life on earth, of the Church and the State.

The original text¹ says :
 Those of Bābā (Nānak),
 and those of Bābur,
 God Himself maketh them both.
 Know the former thus :
 as the King of Religion.
 Understand the latter thus :
 as the secular king.
 They who fail to render that,
 what is due to the (House of) Bābā,
 The minions of Bābur seize them,
 and make exactions upon them.
 And inflict severe punishments
 upon such defaulters;
 In addition, their worldly goods and
 property are looted and taken away.¹

The text nowhere says, explicitly or by implication, that the Church and the State "both derive their authority from God Himself." It clearly says, "God maketh them both," as the instruments of His Will. The word in the text, *kare*, neither literally, nor here can be interpreted to mean, *authorized*; it simply means *made by* or *maketh*. Similarly, the word, *pehchāno*, is not in the sense of a commandment : *thou shalt recognise*. It means, *know, identify, understand*. "The (house) of Bābā means, the true Religion on earth, and the texts says, understand the term to mean thus, as such. Likewise, *anumāno* cannot and does not mean *recognise and accept*. It literally and here in the next means, *understand, see, take it as, infer*, that the (house) of Bābur means, 'the secular State.'

There is no doubt left by the Guru about his meanings of this text here. He says, there are two forces which claim allegiance of men's souls on earth, the Truth and Morality as Religion, and the State as embodiment of mere utilitarianism and secular politics. The primary

¹ ਬਾਬੇ ਕੇ ਬਾਬਰ ਕੇ ਦੋਊ॥ ਆਪ ਕਰੇ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਸੋਊ॥
 ਦੀਨ ਸਾਹ ਇਨਕੋ ਪਹਿਚਾਨੇ॥ ਦੁਨੀ ਪੱਤਿ ਉਨਕੋ ਅਨੁਮਾਨੇ॥
 ਜੋ ਬਾਬੇ ਕੇ ਦਾਮ ਨ ਦੇਰੈ॥ ਤਿਨਤੇ ਗਹਿ ਬਾਬਰ ਕੇ ਲੇਰੈ॥
 ਦੇਦੈ ਤਿਨ ਕੋ ਬਡੀ ਸਜਾਇ॥ ਪੁਨਿ ਲੇਰੈ ਗ੍ਰਹਿ ਲੂਟ ਬਨਾਇ॥

allegiance of man is to the Truth and Morality, and those who fail in this allegiance, suffer under the subjugation of the earthly state, un-nourished by the courage and hope which is born through unswerving adherence to their primary allegiance. In this perpetual struggle between the State and the Church, for exclusive possession of the soul of man, a man of culture and religion, shall not lose sight ever of his primary allegiance, and he who does so, does it at his own peril, for by doing so, he helps give birth to times in which everything is force, politics, utility and labour, poverty and hardship, tyranny and slavery, for, the religious and moral spirit is suppressed or destroyed and men become coarse and diabolic. The Guru does not assert that this perpetual dichotomy and antagonism of the Church and the State must be resolved, or even that it is capable of being resolved, by the suppression or subjugation of the one by the other; rather he appears to recognise their eternal antagonism and character and in this antagonism sees the hope and glory of Man, the social and political context in which the Sikh Way of Life is to be practised. The Church must perpetually correct and influence the State without aiming to destroy or absorb it, for, as the History shows the attempt of the one to oust the other, meets with no lasting success, and each of the two antagonistic entities arises again after having been crushed in vain and both appear anew as if bound together. This is what the Guru means, when he declares in the text, that "the House of Bābā Nānak and the house of Bābur, God maketh both of them," and that "those who repudiate their allegiance to the House of Nānak, suffer grievously, without hope, at the hands of the State."

It is from this thesis of Sikhism— in some ways the most remarkable and novel in the whole history of the religious thought—that the injunctions of the Guru relating to bearing of arms by the cultured and mentally alert citizens of the world, the Sikhs, and other cognate features of Sikhism stem out. The last recourse to armed resistance which Guru Arjun, during his last days on earth bade and which Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh adopted, and which the Khalsa has followed ever since, is not a relapse from a higher religion into temptation to use force, as some eminent students of

World History think,² nor is it a matter of diversion into exigency dictated by contemporary circumstance.³

It is definitely and clearly a matter of doctrine grounded in sound pragmatism and a realistic view of religion, such as Sikhism is. For, as the world History illustrates, as the Sikh history shows, and as the contemporary developments in the interregnum between the two World wars have established, human pacifist conscience has not any conceivable chance of ever emerging triumphant over the secular barbarity and organised tyranny of the modern state, unless aided by arms, directly or indirectly, for as Guru Gobind Singh tells us,

On this plane of phenomenon, the final arbiters are the sword and the Time and on mighty arms alone much reliance can be placed.⁴

For this reason a cultured and keen citizen, therefore, must insist on preserving his right to bear arms so as to keep the secular State in its proper place, with a view to secure the balance between the Church and the State in human affairs, so that the one does not overwhelm the other to the misery and perdition of mankind.

The whole context of the text under discussion bears this interpretation out. The text occurs in the thirteenth chapter of the part of the Dasamgranth, called "Bachitrnatak" the strange play. In this chapter,

² While it is manifest in the cases of Judaism, Christianity and Mahayana that a higher religion was being diverted from its own mission in being exploited politically, this is not less true, though it may perhaps be less obvious, in the cases of Islam and Sikhism . . . Sikhism again, originated as a concordance of Hinduism with Islam and it fell from this religious height into a political trough because the Sikh Gurus Hargovind and Govind Singh, and their eventual political successor the Sikh war-lord, Ranjit Singh, succumbed, like Prophet Mohammad, to the temptation to use force."

Arnold Toynbee, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, p. 113.

³ "In the encounter between the Islamic and the Hindu civilizations, Sikhism, which had been founded to transcend the divisions between the Hindus and Muslims by preaching the gospel of the higher religions to all men in terms that all men could accept was diverted—under provocation from Mughal Empire that grew more intolerant as it became more decrepit—into serving as the instrument of a militant Hindu reaction against the militancy of Islam."

Ibid., pp. 115-116.

⁴ ਯਾ ਕਲ ਮੇ ਸਭ ਕਾਲ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਨ ਕੇ ਭਾਰੀ ਭੁਜਾਨ ਕੇ ਭਾਰੀ ਭਰੋਸੇ॥

Bachitrnatak, DG, p. 45.

the Guru, after some cosmogonical reflections, gives a proto-historical account of the origin of the tribe, in which Guru Nānak and he himself were born, and then proceeds to record his auto-biography. After describing the earlier battle of Nadaun, in which the Guru played his part in 1687, and subsequent Eight Years' Warfare, called *Hus-saini-yuddha* in the Sikh literature, as the leader and policy-maker, and not "as a subject of Kahlūr," as the learned authors obsequiously declare in total disregard of the fact that the whole conduct of the Guru, since his earliest days and the hectic times to which it gave birth, was inspired by his unconcealed intent and determination to repudiate any claim of overlordship over him and over his Sikhs, howsoever symbolic, by the earthly rajas and the Mughals, the text goes on to describe the expedition of the prince Mu'azzam, the eldest son of Aurangzib, who afterwards became His Majesty Emperor Bahādur Shāh, into the submountain and plain areas lying south of Beās in the Punjab, called Madradeśa, in the ancient Hindu geographical texts. This expedition was ordered by Aurangzib to reassert imperial authority in this area, which had been visibly shaken as evidenced by the defeat of the Mughal forces at Nadaun, and the subsequent successes of the Sikhs and their hill allies in the Eight Years' Warfare, which were, in fact, gureilla skirmishes, His Imperial Majesty, Aurangzib, himself was then busy in Deccan, subduing the heterodox Shī'ah Mohammedan kingdoms in this peninsula, but he was fully aware of the real nature of the impulse and inspiration behind the Nadaun defiance of government authority, as well as the daring and courage displayed by the people in the Eight Years' Warfare. In 1693, on November 20, His Majesty found time from his engrossing campaigns in Deccan, to issue the edict, that "Gobind declares himself to be Guru Nānak. All military commanders concerned ordered to prevent him from assembling his followers."⁵ This was the background of this expedition of Prince Mu'azzim, and it is this expedition which is described in Chapter Thirteenth, of the *Bachitranātak*, sub-titled, "The Arrival of the Prince in the Madradeśa."⁶ The Guru opens the

⁵ *Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mu'alla*, Vol. I, 1677-1695.

* ਸਰਜਾਦੇ ਕੋ ਆਗਮਨ ਮੱਦ੍ ਦੇਸ॥

Chapter by saying that on account of the Eight Years' Warfare, "Aurangzib was extremely upset in his mind and he ordered his son to proceed to Madradeśa."⁷ The Guru then says that "the arrival of the prince caused general consternation; all the prominent hill chiefs took refuge in obscure hilly hide-outs."⁸ The Guru records that :

Many people tried to frighten us also, but little did they understand the secrets of the contingent and the unforeseen. Some people deserted us and sought shelter in the inaccessible inner Himalayas. These wretches were stricken with craven fear. . . . (on learning of this) Aurangzib raged and ordered a military commander to pierce into these hide-outs. This military contingent destroyed the homes of those who had thus turned their backs on us.⁹

It is at this stage in the narrative that the Guru pauses to make the didactic remarks of the text under discussion. He says that,

those who repudiate their primary allegiance to the Truth and morality are the losers here and in great peril hereafter.¹⁰

Proceeding in the same strain, the Guru explains his meaning by making the declaration about the House of Bābā Nānak and the house of imperial Bābur, which is the text under discussion. In verses 5-15 the Guru gives a clear exposition of the status and interrelationship of the Church and the State, purport of which we have already given in the preceding lines, and then from verse 16 onwards, the Guru takes up again the narrative of the prince's expedition.

⁷ ਤਬ ਅਉਰੰਗ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਰਿਸਾਵਾ॥ ਮੱਦੁ ਦੇਸ ਕੋ ਪੂਤ ਪਠਾਵਾ॥

Ibid.

⁸ ਤਿੰਹ ਆਵਤ ਸਭ ਲੋਕ ਡਰਾਨੇ॥ ਬਡੇ ਬਡੇ ਗਿਰ ਹੇਰ ਲੁਕਾਨੇ॥

Ibid.

⁹ ਹਮਰੂੰ ਲੋਗਨ ਅਧਿਕ ਡਰਾਯੋ॥ ਕਾਲ ਕਰਮ ਕੋ ਮਰਮ ਨ ਪਾਯੋ॥
ਕਿਤਕ ਲੋਕ ਤਜਿ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਿਧਾਰੇ॥ ਜਾਇ ਬਸੇ ਗਿਰਵਰ ਜੋਰ ਭਾਰੇ॥
ਚਿਤ ਮੂਜੀਯਨ ਕੋ ਅਧਿਕ ਡਰਾਨਾ॥ . . .
ਤਬ ਅਉਰੰਗ ਜੀਅ ਮਾਂਝ ਰਿਸਾਏ॥ ਏਕ ਅਹਦੀਆ ਈਹਾਂ ਪਠਾਏ॥
ਹਮ ਤੇ ਭਾਜਿ ਬਿਮੁਖ ਜੇ ਗਏ॥ ਤਿਨਕੇ ਧਾਮ ਗਿਰਾਵਤ ਭਏ॥

Ibid.

¹⁰ ਜੇ ਅਪਨੇ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਫਿਰਹੈ॥ ਈਹਾਂ ਉਹਾਂ ਤਿਨਕੇ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਿ ਗਿਰਿਹੈ॥

Ibid.

Throughout this Chapter Thirteen, the Guru nowhere, so much as hints, that there was any "understanding" between him and the Mughal Government, or that the Sikh doctrine is, in essence, the care of the other world, through non-interference with this world, which should remain within the exclusive domain of the secular State, or that it was through the intervention of Bhāi Nand Lāl, as the learned authors of *A Short History of the Sikhs* assert, that Guru Gobind Singh was left unmolested by the imperial forces, the price of which the Guru paid by declaring his assent to the divine right of the earthly kings to rule. The whole of this is, purely and altogether, seen to be an outcome of the imagination of the learned authors, unsupported by any historical or documentary evidence whatever, and grounded in unintentional antagonism to the whole spirit of the Sikh tradition, history and teachings.

The only established fact is that the imperial expeditionary contingents inflicted severe punishment on the residents and refugees in the hill areas and pursued the disaffected elements into their hide-outs in the inner Himalayas, but they did not think it necessary or wise to invest the fortified town of Anandpur, the seat of Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru cryptically declares that the imperial forces decided not to join issues with him, who was known to be the open inspiration behind the spirit of independence shown by the people in the Eight Years' Warfare, because "God protected me as He always succours and helps His humble servants."¹¹ The whole of the rest of the story of our authors is pure imagination and wholly misconceived.

For, let us look at the matter from another angle. From 1687 to 1695, the Guru was openly providing spiritual refreshment and encouragement to people around him to arouse their self-respect and spirit of independence, which resulted in a prolonged insurrection against the imperial authority. This mysterious "understanding", about which there is no authentic word in the Sikh contemporary or

¹¹ ਦਾਸ ਜਾਨ ਮੁਰਿ ਕਰੀ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਆਪ ਹਾਥੁ ਦੈ ਲਯੋ ਬਚਾਇ॥

Bachitranatak, DG, p. 73.

subsequent records, or tradition, is supposed to have been reached immediately after the Eight Years' Warfare, when prince, Mu`azzim, in obedience to the imperial command, actually led an expedition to punish the insurrectionists. The *Bachitranātak*, by common consensus, is a composition which can safely be dated between the years 1695-1699, soon after the arrival of the imperial expedition into the *Madradeśa*, and before the inauguration of the Order of the Khalsa, the aims and constitution of which latter, we have already shown as basically repudiatory of this "understanding". In the *Bachitranātak* itself, wherever there is a reference to His Imperial Majesty, *Ghulām Muhayyud Dīn Aurangzīb*, whom according to the learned authors of *A Short History of the Sikhs*, the Guru had formally recognised and bidden men to recognise as *dejure divino* King on earth, the Guru, invariably refers to as "Aurangā"¹², a diminutive proper name and a contemptuous nickname hardly supportive and suggestive of allegiance due by mortals to a King by divine right. This is the Guru's attitude to the house of Bābur, which according to this "understanding" was invested with divinity, by the Guru! the other party invested with divinity, according to this "understanding", was the House of Nānak, and yet in 1699, we find the Guru expressly declaring that the divinity of the House of Nānak is an emanation of the spiritual Dignity of the People, and is not something apart and independent of it.

Through the grace of the People, has the Guru achieved victories on the battlefield and through their help was he enabled to be compassionate to all Men. The Guru's sufferings and travails were mitigated by the grace of the People, and through their grace the Guru was replenished. By the grace of the people did the Guru acquire sciences and learning and by their aid his enemies were destroyed. Our spiritual Dignity and status is wholly due to the

¹² ਤਬ ਅਉਰੰਗ ਜੀਅ ਮਾਂਝ ਰਿਸਾਏ॥

Bachitranātak, DG, p. 71.

ਤਬ ਅਉਰੰਗ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਰਿਸਾਵਾ॥

Ibid.

People; otherwise, there are countless millions of worthless men like me in the world.¹³

Is it these People the Guru was solemnly bidding a year or two earlier, to recognise and accept the earthly kings as ruling over them by divine right which made these kings "supreme in secular affairs"? At this time and the long years that preceded it and the difficult years that followed, the whole overt conduct and public programme of the Guru is shown to be such which constitutes an open challenge to the authority of "the house of Bābur" over the secular affairs of those who were admittedly their subjects, and, as is clear from the circumstances of the Eight Years' Warfare, this challenge and defiance struk primarily at the most elementary right of the house of Bābur, which they enjoyed as earthly kings, namely to collect taxes,¹⁴ a right recognised by the race to which the Guru belonged, since the most ancient times. The *Rgveda* itself defines a king as "the sole taker of taxes."¹⁵ The encyclopaedic literature which the Guru created during the short spell of peace which he was allowed by the "house of Bābur" and their underlings, after the cessation of the *Hussaini-yuddha*, in 1695 and before the inauguration of the Khalsa in 1699, and out of which literature some fragments are still with us, inspite of the attentions of the "house of Bābur" against all that the Guru dreamt and did, is full of the same spirit of defiance against all forms of tyranny by the earthly kings, and there is not a word in this literature which even indirectly supports the allegation of the learned authors of *A Short History of the Sikhs* that the Guru arrived at any such "understanding"

¹³ ਜੁੱਧ ਜਿਤੇ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਸੁ ਦਾਨ ਕਰੇ।
ਅਘ ਅਉਘ ਟਰੈ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਫੁਨ ਧਾਮ ਭਰੇ।
ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਸੁ ਬਿਦਿਆ ਲਈ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਸਭ ਸਤ੍ ਮਰੇ।
ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕੇ ਸਜੇ ਹਮ ਹੈ ਨਹੀ ਮੇਸੇ ਗਰੀਬ ਕੋਰਰ ਪਰੇ॥

Swayye Patshahi 10, DG, pp. 716-17.

¹⁴ "The attempt of the Delhi Government to collect tribute from the hill chiefs led some of them to change sides and seek help from the Guru in opposing the payment."

—*A Short History of the Sikhs*, p. 1.64.

¹⁵ धुव धवेण हविषाऽग्निं सोमं मृशामसि॥
अयो त इन्द्रः केवलीर्विशो बलिहस्तस्कूत॥

Rgveda, X. 173.6.

through the intercession of a devoted Sikh of his, Bhāi Nand Lāl, which recognised the right of "the house of Bābur" to rule over people by divine right. On the contrary, the Guru, in the *Bachitrānāṭak* itself, almost in the same breath with which he is alleged to have declared this "understanding", repeatedly finds it necessary to asseverate that he "does not, and shall not say or do anything, or shall refrain from saying or doing anything, merely on grounds of expediency or worldly considerations, and nor does he say or do anything which is not directly inspired by God."¹⁶

In view of these facts, what justification do our learned authors possess for making this assertion and insinuation that at one time of his life, the Guru showed willingness to recognise the divine right of the earthly kings to be "supreme in secular affairs" of men, and to advise and bid mankind to render unto Caesar that which is, by past tradition, his?

The learned authors of *A Short History of the Sikhs* have, unwittingly, stultified this dictum of Guru Gobind Singh, one of the most significant contributions to the sciences of Morals and Politics.

¹⁶ ਜੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਜਗਤਿ ਕਹਾ ਮੇ ਕਹਿ ਹੋ॥ ਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਲੋਗ ਤੇ ਮੋਨਿ ਨ ਰਹਿਹੋ॥
 ਕਹਿਯੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਸੁ ਭਾਖਿਹੋ॥ ਕਿਸੁ ਨ ਕਾਨ ਰਾਖਿਹੋ॥

 ਨ ਕਾਨ ਕਾਚੁ ਕੀ ਧੋਰੋ॥ ਕਹਿਯੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਸੁ ਮੇ ਕਰੋ॥

Bachitrānāṭak, DG, p. 57.

CHAPTER XI

THE SIKH RAJ

The learned author of *The Hindu Polity* makes the following observation, at the conclusion of his book :

But when there was a Hindu revival in the time of Śivaji and the Sikhs, the Sikhs as a polity failed because they could not connect themselves with the Past. They followed a system which prevailed around them and established a polity of one man's rule. Guru Govinda wanted to remedy it, but the attempt brought out no man's rule. It was the Padshahi, the Moghul form, in success and in defeat, in rise and in fall.¹

It is necessary to examine this observation so as to clarify certain implications of our main thesis. The problem of the origin, distribution and exercise of power is the basic question of polity and goes to the very roots of human civilization. This question, therefore, has naturally engaged the attention of the ancient Hindu thinkers, which is the Past and the background of the Sikhs and the Sikh doctrines.

In the *Rgveda*, the monarchy appears as the only and the normal form of government. In the *Aitreyabrāhmaṇa* supplement of the *Rgveda*, it is asserted that the Law can never overpower lawlessness except through a monarch :

The *devas*, the gods and *asuras*, the antigods, were at war . . . and the *asuras* were victorious; they defeated the *devas*. The *devas* said, 'it is on account of our having no king that *asuras* defeat us. Let us have a king.' To this all agreed.²

¹ K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 351.

² देवासुरा व एषु लोकेषु समयन्तः . . . तांस्ततोऽसुर अत्यन्तु

देवा अक्षु वन्नाजतया वै तो जयति राजनि करवामहा इति तथति ।।

Aitreyabrahmana, I.4.

Do these *devas* and *asuras* represent the invading Indo-Aryan and aboriginal Dravidians of Harappā and Mohenjodaro respectively in the second millenium B.C.? Did the R̥gvedic Aryans borrow the institution of monarchy from their non-Aryan adversaries of north-western-India, and did they abandon their original republican tradition owing to the exigencies of war? Whatever the truth in these speculations, a thousand years' later, *Mahābhārata* is quite clear that the republican or non-kingly forms of government are improper and unvedic.³ In the third century B.C., Megasthenese recorded it as the accepted opinion that monarchy was the original and was prior to the republican form of Government in India.⁴

In ancient India, whether Hindu, Buddhist or Jain, all appeared to be unanimous that though kingly form of government is the most approved and desirable form of government, all the same it was an unfortunate necessity and in 'silver' ages of the past, a government itself was wholly unnecessary; "*na tatra rājā rājendra na daṇḍo na cha daṇḍikah, svadharmenaiva dharmajñāste raksanti parasparam*"⁵ which means that 'in the earlier ages, there was no king and no state apparatus, no penal code and no one to administer it, for, everyone faithfully performed his duties and obligations.' Kingship came into existence to preserve, as much as was possible, of the golden age, in a period of all-out decline and degeneration in the current iron age' (*Aitreyabrāhmaṇa*, i. 14, *Taittiriyaopaniṣad*, i. 5). These earlier texts visualise the king as merely a war-leader, such as Indra is portrayed in the *R̥gveda*, to protect and preserve the pure-race, the ar̥yans from external attacks, but later on, it would appear that, apprehension of lawlessness and fear of anarchy, *arājakatā*, that is non-government chaos, preoccupied the minds of the sacerdotal theorists. The legend in *Mahābhārata* (*Śāntiparva*, xii. 67) informs us that in the ages gone by once upon a time, men met to keep the peace and to expel evildoers.

³ नाराजकेषु राष्ट्रेषु वस्तव्यमिति वैदिकम् ।

Śānuparvam (Kumbhkoram recension). *Mahabharata* 66.5

⁴ McCrindle, *Ancient India* as described by Megasthenese and Arrian, pp. 38-40.

⁵ न तत्र राजा राजेन्द्र न दण्डो न च दण्डिकः ।

स्वधर्मणैव धर्मज्ञास्ते रक्षन्ति परस्परम् ।।

Bhishma Parvam, *Mahabharata* XI, 39.

The agreement was, however, more honoured in breach than in observance, as students of political affairs know only too well, as the normal human situation, and so men waited upon the Creator of the world *Brahmā*, who then ordained *Manu* as the first King, a good-hearted soul. He, however, declined the assignment on the true enough ground that government, politics and politicking involved much evil and sin, but the people overcame *Manu*'s honest scruples by promising him a share of their crops and herds and also of whatever religious merit they might earn.

This is the origin of the theory of the divine king who derives his authority primarily from the Creator-god, *Brahmā*, but who also bases his prerogatives on human consent that authorises him to levy taxes.

There is another story in the *Mahābhārata* (*Śāntiparva*, xii. 59) according to which not lawlessness and social chaos but religious decline, irregular performance of sacrificial ceremonials, *yajna*, threatening the cosmic order and existence of the gods themselves that obliged *Brahmā* to compose the basic text on Polity, whereupon the gods approached the Preserver of the Universe, *Viṣṇu*, who then, out of his own mind, *sankalpa*, created a miraculous and supernatural being to rule over men and to ensure that the latter performed their religious duties duly.

This *Mahābhārata* story further tells that the first king was *Virajas*, who in fulness of time was succeeded by a self-willed, progressive-minded king, *Vena*, who promulgated a new Hindu Code, so to speak, legalising inter-caste marriages thus inaugurating social chaos, *sankaravarāṇa*, and this king *Vena* was then summarily destroyed by his priestly counsellors, the *rishis*.

This is the origin of the fundamental Hindu right of the people to revolt against the State.

The points of this *Mahābhārata* legend are clear, (1) the king is a divine figure nominated by gods in heaven and he does not derive any part of his authority from the consent of the people, (2) this king is the servant of the gods and he owes no obligation to men, his duty being to maintain religion and the social order sanctioned by it, and (3) the people may revolt against and destroy him if the king does not serve the gods well and faithfully.

The other polarity of the doctrine of the origin of kingship is enshrined in the Buddhist legend (*Dīgh-nikāya*, III. pp. 92-3) as the 'Mahāmat's Doctrine' according to which 'the Hon'ble chosen one', the king, was elected at an enormous gathering of the people at a time when private property and family were being subjected to all kinds of arbitrary ceilings, and unnatural interference in natural generation, *santānsanyam*, and the king was appointed to maintain freedoms of lawfully acquired property and normal propagation of progeny and as his fees for performing these duties he was to be entitled to levy taxes in cash and kind.

This is the earliest version of Rousseau's doctrine of Social Contract, making the king as a mere servant of the people.

The earthly *Arthasāstra*, however, tells us that the divine-king theory as well as the civil-servant theory might both be pressed into the service of political propaganda. At one place, *Arthasāstra* (xiii, 1) advises the king to instruct his Public Relation agents to make it known that the king is divine, while at another place (X. 3) the king is told to say before his troops that he is a paid servant, just as they are, of the state.

In this legendary background a picture emerges from pre-Christian centuries onwards, after the raid of Alexander into the Indian satrapy of the Persian empire, and the establishment of the Mauryan empire, in which the republican form of government, to the existence of which the Greek writers and the Buddhist chronicles bear ample testimony, almost disappears from India for the coming two and a half millenia and monarchy becomes the only accepted and prevalent form of government, till the establishment of the Republic of the Union of India in 1950. Obviously, it was this hoary Hindu tradition to which Maharaja Rañjit Singh tried to link the destinies of the Sikh nation and not to "the Padshahi, the Moghul form", as Dr. Jayaswal erroneously thinks, and as we shall see, the Sikh polity failed or received a temporary setback, precisely because of Maharaja Rañjit Singh's desire to 'connect the Sikhs with the Past', in disregard of the clear injunctions of Guru Gobind Singh to the Khalsa,

to march to securer stability and more enduring prosperity by renouncing Brahmanic traditions and the leadership of the priestly.

Brahmins, which is a pre-requisite of the Divine aid to the Cause of the Khalsa.⁶

For, "the only essential tenets of Hinduism are recognition of the Brahman caste and divine authority of the Vedas. Those who publicly deny these doctrines as the Buddhists, Jains, and the Sikhs have done, put themselves outside the pale."⁷ It was the desire of this one strong man, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who imposed it upon an unwilling nation, to revert to the pale of Hinduism, that forced the Sikhs to try the fatal experiment of Hindu monarchy which resulted in the failure of the Sikh polity in the first half of the 19th century.

This monarchy as the form of government, declared and accepted as the only proper form of government for the Hindus was, as we have seen, accorded divine sanction, as in the *Mānavadharmaśāstra* it is laid down that,

God Himself created the King to protect people from lawlessness.⁸

Since the king ruled by divine right, he was a god, unamenable to the control or opinions of the people, as far as the theory goes and, therefore,

Even an infant King must not be despised,
as though a mere mortal, for, he is a great god in human form.⁹

The king, to be formally invested with godhead, must, however, be anointed with the *abhiṣeka* ceremony by the Brahmin priest, for, an unanointed king is an unlawful king whom the gods do not favour. An

⁶ ਜਬ ਲਗ ਰਹੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਨਿਆਰਾ, ਤਬ ਲਗ ਤੇਜ ਦੀਓ ਮੈ ਸਾਰਾ॥

ਜਬ ਗਹਿ ਹੈ ਬਿਪ੍ਰਨ ਕੀ ਗੀਤਿ, ਮੈ ਨ ਕਰਓ ਇਨ ਕੀ ਪਰਤੀਤਿ॥

Khalsa Rahitnamch, X.

⁷ Charles Eliot, Sir, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, I, p. 40.

⁸ अराजको हि लोकेऽस्मिन्सर्दं तो विदुते मयात् ।

रक्षार्थस्य सर्वस्य राजानमसृजत् प्रभुः ।।

Manu Smriti, VII.3.

⁹ बालोऽपि नावमन्तज्यो मनुष्य इति श्रुतिः ।

महतो देवता ह्योषा नररूपेण तिष्ठति ।।

Ibid., VII.8.

unanointed king is a term of contempt in Hindu politics, and it is declared that,

Such barbarous customs are the hall-mark of dirty westerners and foreigners.¹⁰

So far as Hindu king is subject to the control and influence of God Almighty and His Brahmins only, the earthly *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭīliya decrees, somewhat inaccurately, that

A single wheel cannot turn and so government is possible only with assistance. Therefore, a king should appoint ministers and listen to their advice.¹¹

This is the eternal triangle of Hindu monarchy, the god-king, the priestly Brahmins, and the ministers by royal choice. Here is a king who has no legislative powers and whose function it is to uphold the social structure of *varṇāśramadharmā* as laid down in the Brahmanic sacred texts, whose formal installation is dependent upon the approval and good will of the hereditary priestly class of Brahmins, and who is constantly surrounded by a clique of ministers of his own creation, who tend to usurp his powers and replace him. This Hindu polity ensures a static, conservative society which abhors social progress and change as intrinsically undesirable and dangerous, for *Mānavadharmāśāstra* bids a citizen to—

walk in that path of good and virtuous people which his father and grandfather followed; while he walks in that, he will not suffer harm.¹²

¹⁰ भविष्यन्तीह यवना धर्मतः कामतौऽर्थतः ।

जैव मद्भूतं मिषिपतास्ते भविष्यति नराधिपाः ॥

Vayūpurāṇa (Pargiter), p. 56.

¹¹ सहाय साध्यं राजत्वं च मेकं न वर्तते ।

कुर्वीत सचिवांस्तस्मात्तेषां च शृणुयान्मतम् ॥

Arthashastra, 1.7.15.

¹² येनास्य पिता याता येन याता पितामहाः

तेन यमसतां मार्गं तेन गच्छन्तरिष्यते ॥

Mānavadharmashāstra, iv. 178.

It further ensures that this Society is upheld by an autocratic king, who rules not only by divine right but as a divine being, answerable to no mortal on earth as far as the theory goes. As a necessary consequence, this form of government ensures the intellectual leadership of the Hindu Society to the priestly Brahmins, who are, *ex hypothesi*, committed to the *varṇāśramadharmā*, the four fold economico-political structure of the Hindu social pyramid. The concept of human, man-made, legislation, as an instrument of social change, social justice or amelioration of human inequalities, simply cannot arise in this polity, for, as Henry Ward Beecher has rightly said, "Laws and Institutions are constantly tending to gravitate. Like clocks they must be occasionally cleansed, and wound up and set to true time." And this leads to another, equally grave, consequence. The continuity and stability of State depends upon a permanent, well-trained and loyal Civil Service, and a permanent Civil Service stems out of the concept of impersonal law and the rules to which this law gives birth, the day-to-day implementation of which is the function of such a Civil Service. The concept of the impersonal law alone can give birth and validity to the modern concept of 'State'. In an autocracy, there is no rule of law, but the rule of the fiat, and it is the whim and the will of the ruler which is paramount and supreme. If there is no rule of law, there is no State, but only the personal domain of an individual, which is born with every new ruler and dies away with him. In such a polity, there can be no permanent Civil Service, but only a team of personal minions and there can be no loyalty to any supra-individual state, which does not exist. All is personal favour and personal loyalty, preferment and courtiership, fiat and whim, presided over by a paranoic individual, under the delusion that he is a god, subject to the control of no man on earth but, in practice, a prisoner of the priestly Brahmins and his own creation, the ministers.

True enough, there is no proper concept of 'State' understood or recognised in Hindu polity. There is the concept *rājā*, the king, and the concept of *rājya*, 'the kingdom' or, more accurately, 'that which pertains to a king'. True, it was recognised that there are seven *prakṛtis* or characteristics of a kingdom and this is the maximum approximation to the western concept of 'State' in Hindu polity, a concept of a

State in an embryonic form, by no means even remotely comparable to the Platonic or Hegelian 'State'. In a text on Hindu polity, called *Śukraniti*, a vastly more developed concept of 'State' is given, derived from the formula of the Seven *Prakṛtis*, but it has now been finally established that *Śukraniti* is a composition of the 19th century by a Brahmin, who was well-acquainted with the government Regulations of the East India Company and the Marāṭhā administration. Government, in Hindu polity is extension of the king and the king's duty is to protect social order which is fixed and predetermined. This the king does through *daṇḍa*, punishment and coercion, for, as it is put in the *Mānavadharmasāstra* tersely, "a sinless and straight man is hard to find." (VII. 38). There is a mystical nexus between the *rājā* and his *rājya*, the king being the microcosm of his kingdom. A righteous king not only produces good citizens but also good crops, the right weather, peace and prosperity : *rājā kālasya kārṇam*, as *Śukraniti* puts it, 'the king causes the times to be what they are'. This idea is unambiguously expressed in the Greek inscription of Aśoka discovered in 1957, at Kandhār, in the Kābul Valley : Now, owing to the piety of the King, everything prospers throughout the world.¹³

It is not exactly a cause and effect relationship but something mystical and extra-rational that conceives of the king and his kingdom as an integral unity. And both must live and perish together as is the case with the body and the soul.

This is the whole weakness and tragedy of the Hindu polity, the Hindu theory of monarchy, a stateless kingdom, a lawless government, without a permanent Civil Service and a polity, grounded in a triangle of king, Brahmins and ministers, with inherent seeds of self-destruction. This is the key to the recurrent impermanence of all great kingdoms of ancient and medieval India, the Maurya empire, the Gupta empire, the Harsha empire, the Pāla kingdom of Bengāl and Bihār, the Pratihāras of Kanyakubja, the Kalchuris of Tripuri, the Chalūkyas of Gujarāt, the Senas of Bengāl, the Pallavas of Kānchi, the Chaulūkyas of Kanchi and Vengi, Rāṣtrakūṭas of Mānkheta, Cholas and Hoyaslas of Tanjore, Yādavas of Devgiri, Kākṛṇiyas of Wārangal,

¹³ (*Un Editio Billingu Graeco-Aramaico di Asoka*, Serie Orientale Roma, XXI, Rome, 1958).

Pandvas of Madurāi, the Vijyanagar empire, and the modern Marāṭhā empire and the Sikh empire. It is the same story again and again; the god-king dies, is defeated or disappears otherwise; there is no state, no corpus of secular law, no legislating organ, no permanent Civil Service there to ensure continuity, and chaos follows in the wake of brilliant achievements of individuals, and decay supervenes after remarkable peaks of civilisation and culture reached. More often than not, a minister succeeds in obtaining complete control of a kingdom and the king becomes a denizen of the land of the dead, or a mere puppet. This happened more than once in ancient India, as in the middle of the 4th century B.C. Mahāpadma Nanda, the emperor of Magadha, was a virtual puppet in the hands of his minister, Chāṇakya, who later on helped Chandragupta to found the Mauryan empire; this happened in the Vijyanagar empire, where the aged Rām Rāj who lost the battle of Tālikota (1565), was not the legal king, but the hereditary minister of the insignificant Sadāśiva; this happened in the Marāṭhā state, where the descendants of Śivāji were completely eclipsed by the Peśwās, and the same thing happened in Nepāl till only recently. It was precisely this eternal trend of the Hindu polity which so heartlessly destroyed the Sikh empire through low conspiracy, vile treachery, and rank betrayal, in the vain hope of replacing the descendants of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by the descendants of minister Dhyān Singh Dogrā.

And, what about the Islamic polity, the Mughal pattern of administration, which our learned critic, Jayaswal, tells us, Maharaja Ranjit Singh followed that led to one-man rule?

A *ḥadith* of the Prophet tells us that 'king is the shadow of God on earth'.¹⁴ A Persian manuscript¹⁵ of twelfth century informs that, 'if there were no kings, men will devour each other.' On the authority of *Alchemy of Felicity*¹⁶ by famous Al-Ghazzālī, (1058-1111) we learn

14

السلطان ظل الله في الأرض

[ਰਾਜਾ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਵੀ ਉਪਰ ਰੱਬ ਦਾ ਪਰਛਾਵਾਂ ਹੈ]

15

آداب الحرب والتجارت

[ਅਦਾਬ ਅਲਹਰਬ ਵ ਅਸ਼-ਸੁਜਾਅਤ]

16

كيمياء سعادت

[ਕੀਮੀਆਏ ਸਆਦਤ]

that 'king is the heart of the organism of the State'. Mujjaddad, the famous Indian muslim theologian, a contemporary of Akbar and Jehāngir asserts in his letters¹⁷ that, 'king is the soul and people the religious frame.'

What does all this language of images and symbols mean in simple words? It means that the ideal of an Islamic state is not self-government by the people but the observance of the laws of the *Qur'ān* and the traditions of the Prophet. The begetter of the idea of the Islamic state of Pākistān, now transformed somewhat unislamically into the Islamic Republic of Pākistān, has tersely summed up the ideal of an Islamic State, by exhorting its citizens :

Repudiate democracy and representative forms of Government and become efficient law-abiding slaves of the Islamic State.¹⁸

In an Islamic State the ruler is the administrator of laws laid down by God Himself and the '*Ulema*, the theologians, consider themselves to be the persons best qualified to explain those laws. The Caliph, the Sultān or the Amir, is merely the executive officer whose task it is to see that the divine rules, as interpreted by the theologians, are duly observed. These are the fundamental features of an Islamic State and its feudal or agrarian economic framework is a mere superstructure, a secondary character of this state.

What had Ranjit Singh's Government in common with such an Islamic State except that its military organisation, its fiscal system and its structure of feudal levies and agrarian laws were similar to those of the prevailing Mughal pattern, which 'blemish' was shared by the *Marāṭhī Pad-Pādshāhī* also in equal measure?

But this tradition of Hindu polity of monarchy, or the Muslim polity of Islamic State, are not the only traditions familiar to Hindus. As we have suggested earlier, there are reasons to believe that this tradition was alien to the early Indo-Aryans and they apparently

¹⁷

مکتوباتِ مجدد الف ثانی

[ਮਕਤੂਬਾਤਿ ਮੁਜ਼ਦਦਿ ਅਲਿਫਿਸਾਨੀ]

¹⁸

گرمیز از طریقِ جمہوری غلامِ مجتہ کارے شو۔

[ਲੋਕਤੰਤ੍ਰ ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਰਹਿ, ਪੱਕੇ ਕਾਰ ਵਾਲੇ
ਇਸਲਾਮਿਕ ਤੰਤਰ ਦਾ ਗੁਲਾਮ ਹੋ ਜਾ]

accepted it subsequently, when they came in contact with the Mohenjodaro civilization and peoples who along with other ancient contemporary civilisations of the second and third millennia B.C. had a universal tradition of god-kings. We consider it as alien to the pristine Indo-Aryan tradition, for it is not supported by any reference in the earliest and the main corpus of the *Rgveda* and it finds mention only in its supplemental corpus and in the later *vedas*, in particular, the *Atharva*, which is admittedly "the least ancient and which shows marked semitic influences."¹⁹ Though undoubtedly a repository of much that is ancient and pristine, while the earliest and the main corpus of the *Rgveda* suggests and adumbrates another and republican tradition of organisation and exercise of power. Further, this tradition of monarchy in Hindu polity, stoutly upheld by the Hindu thinkers in the historic period, is strangely reminiscent of the similar, identical and older tradition of the civilisations of Sumer, Assyria and Babylonia which were, if not anterior to, certainly contemporaneous with the Mohenjodaro civilisation. This Mohenjodaro civilisation which, under the military shock of the Indo-Aryans, delinquesced into Hinduism and Hindu civilisation,²⁰ was not, as was believed a few years ago, confined to the Indus Valley and the Punjab alone, but extended over the most part of Northern India, as archaeological excavations undertaken during 1950-51 and more recently, reveal and this great civilisation was in constant commerce and contact with its mighty contemporaneous civilisations and peoples across the Persian gulf.

¹⁹ ਕਲਿ ਮਹਿ ਬੇਦੁ ਅਬਰਬਣੁ ਹੁਆ॥ ਨਾਉ ਖੁਦਾਈ ਅਲਹੁ ਭਇਆ॥

Var Asa, M 1, GGS, p. 470.

²⁰ "But were our knowledge less one-sided, we might see that it would be more correct to describe Indian religion as Dravidian religion stimulated and modified by the ideas of Aryan invaders, for the greatest deities of Hinduism, Kṛṣṇa, Shiva, Rama, Durga, and some of its most essential doctrines, such as, metempsychosis and divine incarnations, are either totally unknown to Veda, or obscurely adumbrated in it. The chief characteristics of mature Indian religion are characteristics of an area, not of race, and they are not characteristics of religion in Persia, Greece or other Aryan lands."

Charles Eliot, Sir, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, I, p. xv.

It is in this context that the now famous Code of Hammurabi, acquires a lively significance for us while considering the Hindu polity. Hammurabi was the king of Babylonia during 2123-2081 B.C., about four thousand years ago. He promulgated a Code of Laws in his dominions, a copy of which came to light in 1902 when this Code engraved on a diorite cylinder that had been carried from Babylon to Elam in about 1100 B.C. as a war trophy, was unearthed at Susa.²¹ One side of this cylinder shows the king, Hammurabi, receiving the Laws from the God on High, the Sun-God, Shamas, Himself. The prologue on the other side of this cylinder says :

When the lofty Anu, King of the Annaki and Bel, Lord of Heaven and Earth, He who determines the destiny of the land, committed the rule of all Mankind to Marduk When they proclaimed the lofty name of Babylon, when they made it famous among the quarters of the world and in its midst established an everlasting kingdom whose foundations were firm as heaven, and earth—at that time Anu and Bel called me, Hammurabi, the exalted prince, the worshipper of the gods, to cause justice to prevail in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil, to prevent the strong oppressing the weak.

Is not the doctrine of divinely appointed god-king, as laid down in our *Mānavadharmasāstra*, '*rakṣārthamasya sarvasya rājānamsar jāta prabhuh*'²², almost a paraphrase of parts of this prologue contained in the Code of Hammurabi? And, is not the functional claim of Hammurabi made in this Code strangely reminiscent of the functional purpose of the Divine Incarnations, as laid down in the *Bhagavadgītā* : *paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya cha duṣkṛtām, dharma sansthāpnārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge*.²³

This Code of Hammurabi contains 285 laws, all secular in character, arranged almost scientifically, under the headings of Personal

²¹ This world-famous code of Hammurabi is now in the Louvre, Paris.

^{22, 23} Lord Kṛṣṇa briefs Arjuna that God has created the king for the protection of all the people and that He seeks birth in every *Yuga* for the protection of the good and destruction of the evil, with a view to establish the Rule of Dharma on this Earth.

Bhagavadgītā, IV 8.

property, Real estate, Trade and Business, the Family, Injuries, Labour, etc., and the prototypes of these laws were the Sumerian laws which during the days of Hammurabi, were already two thousands years old.

This is the Hindu polity, and this is "the Past" with which Maharaja Ranjit Singh attempted to connect the political destiny of the Sikhs, which resulted in the failure of the Sikh polity and consequent enslavement of the Sikh people, a condition to which Guru Gobind Singh had specifically bidden them, never to submit. This "Past" is, in important essentials, the same as "the Moghul Pādshāhī," the Islamic monarchy, because the origin of both is the same, the ancient semitic civilisations of Sumer, Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, and the civilisation of Mohenjodaro. In the Islamic monarchy, the king assumes the status of Mohammed's apostle instead of that of god, though by no means less exalted, as is apparent from the claim, which the Moghul emperors validly made for themselves, of being the *Zilli-Ilāhī*, the Shadow of God, on earth. The laws of the static conservative society which a muslim monarch is required to uphold are derived from the *Qur'ān* and the *ḥadīth*, instead of the *Vedas* and the *dharmaśāstras*, and the hereditary intellectual leadership of the Brahmins is replaced by the arrogant and presumptuous prerogatives of the '*Ulema*. Likewise, the Islamic monarch has his ministers, selected and appointed by royal arbitration, whose functions are excellently and truly summed up by S`adi, the Persian didactic poet (1184-1282), in the famous quip to the effect that a minister's "loyal duty is to say, 'Sire, look, how beautifully shine the moon and the stars' whenever His Majesty, the King, asserts at midday, 'It is night'"²⁴ Such ministers, whether of Hindu monarchy, Marāṭhā *Padpādshāhī*, Mughal *Bādshāh*, or a Sikh Maharaja, can hardly be anything but obsequious courtiers to, and surreptitious intriguers against the very monarch, who creates them, and they cannot, as a rule, provide any real assistance or check and counter-balance to the will and wishes of their king.

²⁴

اگرشاه روز را گوید شب است ایس
بیاید گفت ایک ماه و پیرین

Muṣlih-ud-din Sa'di, *Gulistan*.

The long glorious history of the Hindu kingdoms, the illustrious and long story of the Muslim monarchies, and the sad solitary tale of a Sikh kingdom, broadly support the analysis of this theory of monarchy.

What was the pristine Indo-Aryan or, more correctly, Aryan tradition of polity at which we have hinted, a few pages *supra*, and which tradition flourished amongst Aryans of Greece and the Aryan settlements of northern India, till, in the latter case, it was destroyed completely under the impact of monarchical *ekrāja* systems and Hūṇa invasions by the 5th century and which tradition, in the former case, after many vicissitudes, has flowered into the republican democracy of the United States of America and the constitutional monarchy of Great Britain? For, it is to this star of tradition and polity that Guru Gobind Singh has hitched the wagon of the Khalsa, and through them of the Hindu race and the whole mankind, for their sure progress on the road to unlimited prosperity, happiness, freedom and spiritual expansion.

The idea of a samiti or a Folk-assembly is adumbrated in the *Rgveda* itself, where there is a prayer for "a common assembly and a common policy."²⁵ In the later *Atharvaveda* there is a reference to the continuity of this tradition, where "a general session of this, the folk-assemblies"²⁶ is spoken of. The same *Atharva* declares this *samiti*, the Sikh equivalent of which is the *saṅgat*, as "a daughter of God,"²⁷ i.e. eternal or *sui generis* sovereign. It is this doctrine which the Sikh Gurus revived when they declared that "the Guru's sovereignty is full,

²⁵ समानो मन्त्रः समितिः समानी समानं मनः सह चित्तमेषाम् ।

Rgveda X 191.3.

The expression *saṅgrāma*, in this text, literally means, inter-village gathering i.e. a representative session of all constituents of the realm. Since such general sessions were, as a rule, convened only for deliberating over some extreme natural emergency, such as war, the expression, *saṅgrāma*, has acquired, 'war' as its secondary meaning.

²⁶ ये ग्रामा यदरण्यं या समा अधि भूम्याम्
ये संग्रामाः समितयस्तेषु चारु वदेमते ।

Atharvaveda, XII.1.561.

²⁷ *Atharva*, VII. 12.

of twenty measures, but that of the *saṅgat*, as the mouth-piece of the people, is of overriding paramountcy, of twentyone measures."²⁸ The Sikh doctrine of the *sui generis* and inalienable sovereignty of the Khalsa perfected by Guru Gobind Singh, stems out of, and is grounded in, this pristine Aryan tradition of polity. The same hymn of *Atharava* refers to the 'common Assembly' of the *Rgveda* as *sabhā*, adumbrating the principle of collegial representation, when every citizen's personal representation, becomes impracticable. "The *samiti* and the *sabhā* are the two daughters of the *prajāpati*, god,"²⁹ it declares, implying that the principle of indirect representation in no way detracts from the sovereign character and authority of the representative *sabhā*. This representative Assembly of the People, is given the name of *nariṣṭā* in the same hymn.³⁰ *Śāyana* the medieval commentator of the *Vedas*, in his *Sāyanabhāṣya*, explains this term, *nariṣṭa* to mean that which is final and cannot be violated, "*nariṣṭa*", he says, "from its inviolability, the same is derived."³¹ The *samiti* and the *sabhā* consist of, or, are representative of the whole People, *viśah*,³² and there is no defranchised secondary citizenship, slaves or *zimmis*, inferior citizens of the Islamic law, in this pristine Aryan polity. This representative Assembly of the People, the *sabhā*, though sovereign, is still subject to certain eternal principles of good conscience and bonafides and through transgressing these principles the Assembly loses its representative and sovereign character. This dictum is preserved in a Buddhist Pāli *Jātaka* which says that

the Assembly which has no well-meaning and honest members, is no Assembly, the members who do not speak and act bonafides,

²⁸ गुरु घीम घिमदे प्रंगड दिवीम घिमदे॥

This dictum repeatedly occurs in the Sikh literature from the earliest times, as the basic principle of organisation and exercise of power in the Sikh society.

²⁹ सभा च मा समतिकचावतां प्रजापतेर्दुहितरौ संविदाने ।

Atharvaveda, vii.12.1.

³⁰ विद्य ते सभे नाम नरिष्टा नाम वा अरवौ ।

Ibid., 12.2.

³¹ नरिष्टा अहसिता परैरनयि भाव्या ।

Sāyanabhāṣa.

³² विशस्त्वा सर्वा वान्छन्तु मा त्वदान्द्रमधि भ्रशत् ।।

Rgveda X 173.

are no honest members, and the honest and well-meaning members are those who are not swayed by bias or favour and who speak out truthfully and fearlessly.³³

These are the roots out of which the main doctrine of the Sikh polity grow. These doctrines constitute a septinate of the following order : (1) The *sangat*, meaning, the local folk assembly of direct representation. (2) The *Panth*, which is the whole Commonwealth represented by the Peoples' Assembly of indirect representation. (3) The *Khalsa*, which postulates the *sui generis*, inalienable sovereignty of the People. (4) The condominium of *Guru Granth* and *Panth*, which implies that the exercise of power is always subject to bonafides and good conscience. (5) The *Pañjpiārās* which is the doctrine of collegial leadership in the direction of State policies.³⁴ (6) The *Gurmatā* which is the symbol and form of the supreme authority of the Collective Will of the people duly formulated. (7) The *Sarbat Khalsa* doctrine of completely equalitarian free democracy.

Did a republican polity even function in India, of which any credible evidence is available? And did the Sikhs ever attempt to put the principles of their polity into practice?

The answers to both these queries are in the affirmative.

In 330 B.C. Alexander, the Macedonian, defeated Darius III, the last of the Achaemenids, and entered on a campaign to subdue the whole of the Persian empire of which the Gandhāra and the Hindush, the present Pakhtūnistān and the West Punjab of Pakistan, were satrapies or provinces. After a long campaign in Bactria, the Oxus region, Alexander crossed Hindu Kush to occupy the Kābul region.

³³ न सा सभा यत्र न सति संतो न भणति धर्म ।

रायं च दोसं च पहाय मोहं धर्मं भणान्ता च भवन्ति सतो ।।

Jatak, V.509.

³⁴ "The collegiality of leadership," said Lenin, "means that all party matters are accomplished by all party members directly or through representatives, who all are subject to the same rules."—Quoted in the Paper issued by the U.S. State Department, published in the *New York Times*, dated June 10, 1956 (pp. 6-9) purporting to be the text of the speech delivered on February 25, 1956, by Mr. Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to the Twentieth Congress.

He crossed Indus in the spring of 328 B.C. after the king of Takṣaśilā, Ambhi, had submitted to him, and he crossed Jhelum in the winter of the same year to defeat Paurava, the local chief, by a strategy which would render him a war criminal in the eyes of the International conventions or laws of those days, for, it was an accepted Aryan convention not to attack the enemy at night, and never without a forewarning, both of which conventions, the chivalrous Paurava took it for granted, would be observed by the enemy in this case, but which the world-conquering Greek hero violated at the first opportunity to win an un-Aryan victory over his Oriental adversary. It is interesting to recall here that only a year earlier, at the battle of Arbela, in 331 B.C. Alexander had spurned the suggestion of Parmenio to surprise the hosts of Darius by night attack, saying, "No, I will not steal a victory." Obviously, the tradition of Europeans to relax their morals on crossing the Suez into Indian Ocean is of ancient origin. Justly did Vrahmihira, the astronomer, whom Indian writers³⁵ place in the second century before Christ, while European writers³⁶ in the 6th century bemoan in his *panchasiidhantika* that "although the Greeks are well advanced in the sciences, they are otherwise uncivilised".³⁷

After this victory, Alexander advanced farther east, meeting with stiff resistance from small republics and local militias, till at the western banks of the river Beās, his soldiers lost heart, and the conqueror was obliged to beat a retreat, across the Punjab and down the Indus, throughout meeting with stiff opposition from local republics and tribal democracies. Before he could reach his homeland, Alexander, though he survived Hindu military attacks, was finally overpowered by the febriculous toxin-injected in nocturnal un-Aryan raids into his European veins by Hindu mosquitoes of the anopheline caste, as a consequence of which he died of high fever at Babylon, in 323 B.C. and the last of his generals, Endamus, was obliged to vacate the overrun portions of north western India in 317 B.C. When in 305 B.C. Seleucus Nicator, another general of Alexander, once again tried

³⁵ B.S. Rao, *Life of Varahamihira*.

³⁶ A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, p. 490.

³⁷ भलैच्छाहि यवनारस्तेषु शास्त्रमिदं सत्यम् ।

रुषिवत् तेषामि पूज्यन्ते पुनर्वैदवित् द्विजः ॥

to reassert Greek dominion over this north western India, he met with such a severe defeat at the hands of Chandragupta Maurya, 'Sandrocottus' of Plutarch, that Seleucus had to cede Kābul valley and give the hand of his daughter in marriage, as terms of the peace treaty to the victor. It was an ambassador of Seleucus, Magasthenese, at the Mauryan court at Pātliputra, who wrote a detailed account of India, the first eyewitness record of a foreign traveller, which gives such valuable information about the social and political conditions of the country in the 3rd century B.C. Though no manuscript of Magasthenese's description of India has survived, many Greek and Latin authors had made use of it, from which Magasthenese's *Indica* has been reconstructed.

Magasthenese definitely states that two forms of government, monarchical and republican, were then prevalent in India.

They report everything to the king where the people have a king and to the magistrates where the people are self-governed.³⁸

One such republican people, referred to by Greek writers, are the forefathers of the modern Majhails, the back-bone of the Sikh people, who, just before Alexander's raid, had inflicted a defeat on the valiant Paurava, and who, though hopelessly outnumbered by the Greeks, fought Alexander by the *śākata-vyūha*, or 'waggon-formation,' which the Greek phalanx could not pierce, and who refused to submit formally. The Greek writers, call them "Kathians" and describe them as a nation, residing to the east of Hydraotes or the river Rāvi, the present districts of Lāhore and Amritsar of the West Pakistan and Indian Punjab, respectively.

The Kathians themselves enjoyed the highest reputation for courage and skill in the art of war.³⁹

It will be recalled that the descendants of the "Kathians," the Majhail Sikhs, were the leaders of the Sikh mass of about 30,000 unorganised men, women and children at village Kup, near Malerkotlā, in the Indian Punjab, who were surprised and attacked by the 100,000 strong veteran Afghān horsemen of Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, on the grey

³⁸ McCrindle, *Magasthenese and Arrian*, xii.

³⁹ Arrian, *Anabasis*, V. 22, p. 115.

raw morning of 5th February, 1762, killing over 15,000 Sikh women and children, mostly in the first onrush, and as many men more in the next few days of the Sikhs' retreat towards Barnālā in the Paṭiālā District. In this carnage, called the 'Great Holocaust,' *waddāghalūghārā* in Sikh history, the Sikhs defended themselves by means of the same *śākata-vyūha* with which they had met the equally overwhelming numerical odds of the Greek invaders, and once again, though literally decimated to a man, they refused to submit. The capital city of these "Kathians" is mentioned by the Greek writers as "Sankala," which most probably occupied the site at which the Sikh Gurus built Amritsar at the end of the 16th century. To the west of this Majhail republic, adjoining their territory, was a republic state of the "Sophytes," whom Dr. Sylvain Levi has identified with the Sambhūtis⁴⁰ whose territory extended upto the Salt Range, the frontier of the territory of Paurava. Their cities

were governed by laws in the highest degree salutary. . . and their political system was one to admire.⁴¹

It was from this region that the ancestors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh arose to help build the foundations of the Sikh Commonwealth which the Maharaja converted into a monarchy. Two city states are further mentioned as republics, on the west of Beās, but their names, unfortunately are not given.⁴² When the army of Alexander reached Beās, he received intelligence that across the river there was the territory of a republic, which was

exceedingly fertile and the inhabitants [of which] were good agriculturists, brave in war and living under an excellent system of internal government.⁴³

The territory of this republic extended, it would seem, upto Jamunā, beyond which was the empire of Mahāpadma Nanda. The citizens of this trans-Beās republic, had, according to Arrian, elephants of superior size and courage and in greater numbers, and so the

⁴⁰ *Journal Asiatique*, viii. 15, pp. 237 ff.

⁴¹ Diodorus, xvii, 91.

⁴² *Arrian*, v. 24.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, v. 25.

Greek invaders "now began to lose heart," and "positively asserted that they would follow no further."⁴⁴ The citizens of this republic were the forefathers of the Sikhs who founded the cis-Sutlej Sikh states in the 18th century, which endured upto 1956, when they were finally merged in the state of Punjab of the Indian Union.

Thus Alexander retreated. On his retreat, upto Baluchistān, almost all the people Alexander met, were republican. The most powerful republics amongst these people are mentioned as "Oxydrakai" and "Malloi" the Kṣudrakas and Mallavas. Their cities were along the river Chenāb, and their capital was on the river Rāvi, probably, at the site now occupied by Lahore. These two republics in a confederacy, mustered, according to Curtis,⁴⁵ 100,000, soldiers to block the retreat of Alexander, whereupon.

the Macedonians lost their heart at the prospect of meeting this army. . . . When the Macedonians found that they had still on hand a fresh war in which the most warlike nation in all India would be the antagonists, they were struck with an unexpected terror, and began again to upbraid the King in the language of sedition.⁴⁶

It was, while assaulting this capital city or some other city of this confederacy that Alexander almost lost his life. Greek writers assert that this confederacy was defeated, but Pātanjali in his *Mahābhāṣya* shows the Kṣudrakas as emerging out victorious.⁴⁷ These Kṣudrakas and Māllavas are, undoubtedly, the ancestors of most of the *Mājha misls* of the Sikhs of the 18th century, who, as we shall presently show, organised themselves on the basis of republican polity, before they were absorbed into the Sikh empire of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Next republic mentioned by the Greeks is "*Sambastai*."

They were a people inferior to none in India, either for numbers or for bravery, and their form of government was democratic.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ McCrindle, *Invasion of India by Alexander*, p. 121.

⁴⁵ Curtis, ix. 5.

⁴⁶ *Op cit.* p. 234.

⁴⁷ एकाकिमिः क्षुद्रकैर्जितम्

Pātanjali, 3.52.

⁴⁸ McCrindle, *Invasion of India by Alexander*, p. 252.

Alexander made peace with them. The next "independent nation" which Alexander encountered were the "Xathroi", or *Khatris*. Most of Sindhu *sahajdhārī* Sikhs, now settled throughout India, and particularly in the Bombay area, are the modern descendants of these republican people. Another republic mentioned by the Greek writers is, "Musicani", which, from the scanty information given, is difficult to identify now. Their realm is described as "most opulent in India".⁴⁹ It is said about "the Musicani" that they took their meals in a common kitchen, a practice revived by the Sikh Gurus, in the well-known institution, *Gurū-kā-lāṅgar*. The institution of *Gurū-kā-lāṅgar*, (*lāṅgar* Sanskrit, *analgrha*, meaning 'fire-place' (kitchen) which was used by the Sikh Gurus as a powerful lever for equalitarian uplift of the people, by demolishing caste-barriers and the economic apartheid of *varṇāśramadharma*, is a pristine Aryan institution, non-Brahmanic, but having Vedic sanction. A reference to the community kitchen, a sort of *Gurū-kā-lāṅgar*, occurs in the *Atharvaveda*,⁵⁰ which says, "Identical shall be your drink, in common shall be your share of food." These "Musicani," whoever they were, are certainly the spiritual, if not endemic, progenitors of those, now a Sikh people. Another city republic, called "the country of the Brachmins", is mentioned by the Greek writers.⁵¹ "These philosophers", bewails Plutarch,⁵² "gave Alexander, no less trouble" than others. To the south of this 'city of Brachmins' was the republican state of "Patāla". 'Patāla' has been identified with Haidarābād Sind, whose ancient name, Pātālpurī, is still remembered. Before Alexander arrived, the whole population of this republic migrated to avoid submission.

This seems to be an ancient tradition of republican Aryan freemen, to prefer migration to submission. It is recorded in the *Jātakas* and the *Mahābhārata* that the citizens of the Vṛṣṇī republic migrated from Mathurā to Dwārakā to avoid submission to Jarāsandha. 'Sibis' of the

⁴⁹ *Idem, Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, p. 41.

⁵⁰ समानी प्रपा सह वोऽन्नमागः समाने योक्ते सह वो मुनजिम् ।

सम्यञ्चो ऽग्निं सपर्यताए नामिनिवाभितः ।।

Atharvaveda III 30.6.

⁵¹ *Diodorus*, xvii, 103.

⁵² Plutarch, *Alexander*, LIX.

Punjab migrated to Rājputānā and some of them migrated to Kāngrā hills in the area now called, Dādā Sibā, under similar circumstances. The Mallavas of the Punjab, migrated to Mālwa in central India under the impact of White Hūṇa invasion, and later on established powerful states there, as Agnikula Rajputs. The Powārs or Parmārs, a branch of these Agnikula Rajputs founded the Mālwa state, with its capital at Dhār, whose most powerful king was Bhoja (1018-1060), not to be confused with his namesake of Kannauja. Bhoja was a scholar of legendary repute, and a patron of learning having the reputation of an ideal Hindu monarch. He is the author of numerous works on astronomy, architecture and poetry and he adorned his capital, Dhār, with many fine buildings, one of which was a Sanskrit college, now a mosque, and the great irrigation lake at Bhojpurī, measuring 250 square miles in area, which he constructed and which was breached by Muslims in the 14th century, and has never been repaired since, was a remarkable feat of engineering. When Dhār was overrun by Muslim invaders in the fourteenth century the whole population of the ruling Powārs, original Mallavas of Alexander's time, migrated towards Punjab, their original habitat and established their headquarters at village, Kāngar, in the Paṭiālā region, to which place Guru Gobind Singh, repaired in 1706 to write a letter of admonition to emperor Aurangzib, inviting the emperor for personal interview there and assuring him of a safe conduct and a friendly reception.⁵³ These people are now known as Dhārwar or Dhāliwāl Jats, and are found in Paṭiālā,

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کہ شریف در قصبہ کانگر کاند
 دژہ دریں راہ خطرہ تراست
 دژاں پس ملاقات ماہم شود
 ہمہ قوم بیواڑ حکیم مراست
 میاں سخن خود زبانی گوئیم
 بروئے شما معصیان گوئیم

—Zafarnāme 58-60.

The Dhāliwāl Jats still commemorate Kāngar as their foundation back in Punjab by paying the first gift to the hereditary geneologist of Kāngwar, at marriages etc. on the ground that "It is the first halting place on the way back home". (ਕਢੇ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਰੁਪਇਆ ਕਾਂਗੜ ਦੇ ਮਿਰਾਸੀ ਦਾ, ਕਾਂਗੜ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਮੁਕਾਮ ਹੈ). Even this cis-Satluj part of the Punjab, which only till recently was described in official records as "Jungletract", was rechristened as Mālwa by these returning immigrants.

Ludhiānā and Amritsar Districts mostly. The veteran General, Akālī Phulā Singh of Nowshera fame, was one of those whose ancestors had thus emigrated from Dhār. It was the same spirit and tradition of republican independence, which impelled the Sikhs of the West Punjab, along with their endemic Hindu groups, to choose instinctive migration from Pakistan in 1947, while no such reaction was evinced by the Indo-Mongol East Bengal Hindus.

During the pre-Christian era, the Greek invaders throughout the major portion of the Punjab and Sindh, encountered only two of three monarchical systems of government which, in all probability, were elective monarchies, and all others scores of them, were republican.

This story of political organisation in north western India, in ancient times, revealed by foreign observers, finds some corroboratory support in ancient Sanskrit literature as well.

Pāṇini, the illustrious Professor of Grammar at the Takṣaśilā University, modern Taxila, is placed by European scholars at the close of the 6th century B.C. on the basis of political data found in his *Aṣṭādhyāyī* Grammar. Without doubt, this Grammar is one of the greatest intellectual achievements of any ancient civilisation and it is the most elaborate and scientific grammar composed by any one in the world, before the 19th century. But it is so terse, that without a preliminary study, it is difficult to follow without the aid of a suitable commentary. Later Indian grammars are mostly commentaries on Pāṇini, the most famous of which is the *Mahābhāṣya* of Pātaṇjali of about three centuries later and *Kāśikāvṛtti* of Jayāditya and Vāman of thousand years later (6th century A.D.). Pāṇini says "that the word *sangha* is in the meaning of *gaṇa*."⁵⁴ *Gaṇa* means numbers, the people, the majority of them. That is why *Kāśikāvṛtti* explains, "*Sangha* is in the meaning of *gaṇa*; why, because it is the majority which is the essence of *sangha*."⁵⁵ That *gaṇa* means a republican government

⁵⁴ सघे हौ गण प्रशंसयीः ।

III.3.86.

⁵⁵ गण प्रशंसयीः किम् । संघाम् ।

Kasika, p. 214.

becomes quite clear from *Mahābhārata* where Yudhiṣṭra puts the question to Bhīṣma :

I desire to hear O wise and sagacious teacher, how the gaṇas achieve prosperity and how they counteract the enemy sabotage, and how they are victorious, gain alliances and expand, Disunity apparently is the root cause of their ruin, and the greatest weakness, I think, is to keep the resolutions of the state secret, on account of their large numbers.⁵⁶

There is no manner of doubt that these republics or sangha were in existence in the north western India, as Pāṇini himself enumerates these republics by name, in which are included the *Kṣudrakas* and the *Māllavas* encountered by Alexander.⁵⁷ Some of these republics, Pāṇini describes as *āyudhyajivins*, in which all able-bodied citizens bear arms. Earlier, we have noticed that the Greek writers found the *Kṣudrakas* and *Māllavas* as being famous for their military skill. Do we, here, have the prototype of the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh, whose members are required to bear arms and to acquire skill in them with a view to protect and maintain their political independence and way of life?⁵⁸

Another point Pāṇini while enumerating the *sanghas*, adds that they are situated in the *vāhika* land. The *Kāśikāvṛtti* explains that the

⁵⁶ गणाना वृत्तिमिच्छामि श्रोतुं मतिमतां वर ।
यथा गणाः प्रच्छन्ते न मिच्छन्ते च भारत ;
उरीश्च विर्जिगाषन्ते सहदः प्राप्नुवन्ति च ।
भेदमूलो विनाशो हि गणानामुपलक्ष्ये ।
मवस्वरणं दुर्बहुनामिति मे मतिः ।

Śantiparvan, *Mahabharata*, 107, 6-8.

⁵⁷ *Pāṇini*, V, III, 116-17.

⁵⁸ It is interesting that in the first half of the 19th century, when the expanding British power in India made an objective appraisal of the basic character of the Sikh Raj in the Punjab, as reflected in its fundamental organ, the Khalsa Army, it concluded that the Sikh Raj was a "war-like republic." In a letter written from Kasūr, dated Feb. 1848 Sir Henry Hardinge, the British Governor General, observed : "If I can arrange to make Ghulab Singh and the Hill tribes independent including Kashmir, I shall have weakened this war-like republic." Quoted by Ganda Singh in his *Correspondence, Anglo-Sikh Wars*, p. 105, f.n.

Kṣudrakas and *Māllavas* of Greek fame were *vāhika sanghas*.⁵⁹ *Mahābhārata* explains that the *vāhika* land is 'away from the Himalayas'⁶⁰, i.e. does not include the mountainous Himāchal Pradesh.

This *vāhika* land is precisely the Sikh Homeland, the land of origin of Sikhism, and the republican roots of the Sikh polity sprout out of these hoary republican traditions of the race to which Guru Gobind Singh belonged. The territories of the Sikh Raj under Maharaja Ranjit Singh comprised this *vāhika* land and the sub-mountain Himalayan lands of Jammū and Kāngrā, in addition to the exotic Kāśmīr Valley and the Little Tibet. The Bonapartist political policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, as we shall see presently, was beset with mutually contradictory trends of the republican temper of the *vāhika*⁶¹ land and the autocratic monarchical proclivities of the Himalayan *trigartias*, Jammū and Kāngrā, and the Sikh empire eventually blew up in 1849 by the incendiary powder of this mutual ideological conflict between the policies and aims of the republican Khalsa Army and the despotic monarchical trends and aims of the civil apparatus of the Government under the exclusive control of the hill *ḍogrās*, Dhyān Singh and Gulāb Singh.

These *gaṇas* or republics were, by no means exclusively confined to the *vāhika* land though the *vāhika* land may be said to be the traditional birth place and home land of republicanism in ancient India. In the ancient Hindu literature *gaṇas* functioning in other parts of India are also frequently mentioned into the details of which it is not necessary to go here. These republics struck their own coins, some of which have been unearthed during the present century, and are now preserved in museums and private collections. These coins are struck in the name of the *gaṇa* and not any individual, which fact provides a

⁵⁹ वाहीकेषु या आयुधजीवि सधरतद्वायिता क्षौद्रव्य मालव्य ।

pp. 455-56.

⁶⁰ *Karaṇaparva Mahabharata*, XLIV, 6.

⁶¹ The word *vāhika* still exists in the Punjabi language and the peasants of the Punjab call themselves *vahikas* but in the secondary sense of the word, a cultivator, owner of land (ਵਾਹੀਕ, ਵਾਹੀਕਾਰ). The original meaning of *vahika* (Sk) is, "the land of the river", from the verb वह् to flow, from which is derived, बाहिनी meaning, a river. The Punjab and the Indus Valley have, from times immemorial been known as 'the land of the rivers.'

further link between these ancient political institutions and the Sikh political tradition. These coins bear heraldic legends in the then current Indian script of the pre-Christian era, and declaim in the following strain: "Victory to the *gaṇa* of *Arjunāyans*", "Victory to the *Yaudheya-gaṇa*."⁶² The Sikh greetings, coined and made current by Guru Gobind Singh, "The Khalsa is of God, Victory to God", apparently has this ancient republican slogan as its prototypal idea and impulse.

Guru Gobind Singh's "light passed into the Great Light", *joti-jot-samāe*, on the 8th October, 1708, the preceding midnight. A little earlier he had despatched Bandā Singh Bahādur to the Punjab to establish the Sikh Raj, with detailed instructions on the strategy to be followed⁶³ and the pattern of the government to be established.⁶⁴ Precisely two years after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh, in November 1710, the Sikhs proclaimed their sovereignty over the strategic province of Sirhind, thus making the imperial rule of Delhi untenable over the whole of India. The coin which they struck, as a symbol of their sovereignty, bore the following heraldic legend.

This coin is struck as token of Our sovereignty Here and Hereafter.

This divine bounty flows from the central doctrine of Nānak (*teghi-nānak*), and the Victory and Felicity is the gift of Guru Gobind Singh, the King of Kings, the true Master.⁶⁵

An official Seal of Sovereignty was also adopted and introduced, to the effect that,

"The ever expanding prosperity, the strength of arms, and continuous victory and common wealth

⁶² A. Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India*, pp. 77-79. Plates, VI. VII; V.C. Smith, *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, I, pp. 166-170.

⁶³ See *Gurpratāp Sūraj Granth*, III, ii, 6, 15.

⁶⁴ The Guru had enjoined on Bandā Singh Bahādur "to remain pure in conduct and never to touch another man's wife; to be true in word and deed; to look upon himself as a servant of the Khalsa, who would be the Guru in future, and to act always on the advice of the five (representative) Sikhs" — Teja Singh & Gandā Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, p. 80.

⁶⁵

سیکھ زدہ برہورد و عالم تیغ نانک و اہب است -

فتح گویند سیکھ شاہ شاہان فضل سچا صاحب است -

Are all guaranteed to mankind by Guru Gobind Singh, the Nānak.⁶⁶

It was an ancient tradition of the republics of the pristine Aryan polity to have an official heraldic legend and a seal, called *lakṣṇam* and *ankam* respectively, as is implied by Pāṇini.⁶⁷ After a brief spell of sovereignty of five years the Sikhs faced a fifty years' persecution, pogroms and systematic genocide campaigns of the Mughal and Afghān tyrants, till in 1760, they again proclaimed their formal sovereignty at Lāhore under the leadership of Jassā Singh Ahlūwālīā, and they adopted the legend of the official Seal of Bandā Singh Bahādur, as their heraldic legend as well as the official seal citation, *lakṣṇam* and *ankam*, both. For five years after this, the Sikhs had to face another genocide pogrom and campaign of the redoubtable Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, after which, in 1765, they reoccupied Lāhore and formally reasserted their sovereignty, again sticking to the ancient pristine Aryan tradition and the precepts of Guru Gobind Singh of republicanism and adopting the identical legends for coins and the official seal, first introduced by Bandā Singh Bahādur, in 1710.

This position and this tradition, was first compromised by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, gradually, progressively and purposely.

For almost twentyfive years, the general governance of the Sikh Raj at the capital of Lāhore remained entrusted in the hands of a triumvirate of Sikh captains, and in the meantime, the Sikhs continued the struggle for liberating the whole of the Punjab, from the Jamunā to the Indus, from the yoke of foreigners and their collaborators and culturally foreign elements, and every captain *jathedār* or *sirdār*, who thus freed and liberated a territory for the Sikh Raj, had it entered in the records which were maintained by the Custodian-General at *Akāl Takht*, Amritsar, in separate files, which in Arabic is *misal* (*misal* in Punjabi) till the time that the Sikh Raj would be duly

⁶⁶

دیگ دتیغ وفتح ودفرت بید رنگ -
یانت از نانک گورد گوپند سنگه -

⁶⁷ संघाट्टुल्लल्लोष्वतजितामण ॥

गार्गः संघः । गार्गडुल्ल गार्गलक्षणम् ॥

IV. 7.127, *Kashikavritti* (Comments) p. 350.

regularised and established with a constitution based on the principles of Sikh polity. This is the origin of the Sikh *misls* or, confederacies, as they are somewhat loosely called. There were twelve such *misls*, autonomous Sikh militias, in charge of territories, each with a definite clear objective of conquest and preliminary consolidation before itself, it being tacitly understood throughout that the ultimate aim was to establish the Sikh Raj in the land based upon the true principles of Sikh polity in accordance with the ancient precedents, and the precepts of Guru Gobind Singh.⁶⁸

This tacit understanding is explicit in every Sirdār personally reporting the details of the area liberated by his militia, twice a year, to the Custodian-General at the Akāl Takht, and in having the fact duly recorded in the Commonwealth Files, the *misls*; and he reported also, on the interim pattern of government which he set up in the territory under his militia's temporary control. Sir George Campbell, a foreign observer, giving eye-witness account, testifies that the internal government of Phulkiān *misl*, out of whose territories subsequently stemmed the ruling states of Paṭiālā, Nābhā and Jind,

was much more than a mere village, a municipal government; it was diplomatically recognised as a state and had its own administration and state justice . . . There was no chief or hereditary ruler; the state was governed by its panchas or representative elders. . .

Mehraj continued a completely independent, self governing republic down to my own time.⁶⁹

The same writer generally testifies that,

the Sikh system is very much like that out of which the German system sprang. They formed *misls* or confederacies. Twelve *misls* were recognised in early days. Each *misl* elected its own supreme chief and sub-chiefs, and every horseman had his rights and his share in the common conquests. The combined *misls* formed the Khalsa or the Sikh Commonwealth. Just as in Germany, the

⁶⁸ L. Griffin, *Rajas of the Punjab*, 1870, p. 16; James Browne, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs* as quoted by Ganda Singh and Teja Singh in *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, p. 61.

⁶⁹ George Campbell, *Memoirs of My Indian Career*, I, pp. 42-43.

tendency was to an elective supreme chief who had very little power and whose place was not hereditary.⁷⁰

What is this doctrine of *pancha* which is enumerated in the very first pages of the *Guru Granth*, the *Japu* of Guru Nānak, which doctrine was given the form of the basic principle of Sikh organisation and polity, the *pañj piārās*, by Guru Gobind Singh?

Literally, the expression, *pancha* means, five. The number 5, is basic to the decimal system of enumeration, a gift believed to be, of Hindu genius to the world. It represents the five fingers of the human hand, including its master tool, the thumb, which has made homosa-piens superior to the apes in technic-skill. The fingers of both the human hands add up to 10, which is the ultimate number 5, as one term of this system of computation, the number, of the Hindu arithmetic, now adopted by the whole world. The Babylonian system of counting by 12's and 60's, which has been the basis of Indian coinage, weights and measures from times immemorial, till quite recently, when it has been replaced by the original Hindu system of decimals, is also derived from the number, 5, as one term of this system of computation. The number, 12, the other term, represents the twelve months of the solar year, or twelve zodiacs of the sky, and the number 60, is obtained by multiplying it with 5. The other normative number 16, which forms the basis of old Indian coinage, is simply the square of 4, that is, 4 x 4, 'four' representing the four quarters of the Space and the perfect number of Hindu numerology. The expression, *pancha*, occurs in the *Atharvaveda* itself, where in a hymn, referring to election of a representative chief by the people, it is said :

The people elect you to exercise power, the whole people of five directions, *pradeśah pancha*, whose is the glory, for ever and for ever.⁷¹

The 'people of five directions' means all the people of the four directions of the compass and those who represent them at the centre,

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ त्वां विशो वृणतां राज्याय त्वामिमाः प्रदिशः पञ्च देवीः ।

वर्षन् राष्ट्रस्य ककुदि श्रयस्व ततो न उग्रो वि भजा वसूनि ।।

the venue of the Assembly. In the similar election hymns of the *Atharva* the expression *pancha*, frequently occurs as indicative of the whole assembly. In classical Sanskrit, however, this word, *pancha*, has acquired a secondary meaning, that of 'moral intellect', *sresthabuddhi*, and also one who is endowed with this 'moral intellect', integrity and conscience. The expression *pancha* which occurs in the *Japu* of Guru Nānak, has to be interpreted in this context and background, where the text says :

The *pancha* is the true doctrine.

The *pancha* are supreme.

The *pancha* must be recognised in the organisation of power, (literally in the courts of kings).

The *pancha* alone are fit to occupy seats of supreme authority for exercise of power.

The guiding light of the *pancha* is their common objective of divine guidance.⁷²

It was in exegesis of this text of the *Guru Granth*, apparently, that Guru Gobind Singh, while glorifying the *pañj piārās*, declared,

I am ever present, unseen, in the collective deliberations of the *pancha*, and there is no higher guidance on earth, besides.⁷³

It was in 1799 that Ranjit Singh, the Sirdār of the Śukracaklā-misl, occupied Lāhore, through fifth column activities and evicted the Sikh triumvirate from the control of the city and the neighbouring territory. In 1801, on the Baisākhi day, he had the pre-requisite ancient ceremony of Hindu monarchy, *abhiśeka* performed and he assumed the un-Sikh title of Maharaja. His native peasant shrewdness, however, warned him that he was sabotaging the very bases of the Sikh polity,

⁷² ਪੰਚ ਪਰਵਾਣ ਪੰਚ ਪਰਧਾਨੁ॥
ਪੰਚੇ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਦਰਗਹਿ ਮਾਨੁ॥
ਪੰਚੇ ਸੋਹਹਿ ਦਰਿ ਰਾਜਾਨੁ॥
ਪੰਚਾ ਕਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਏਕੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ॥

Japu, GGS, p. 3.

⁷³ ਪੰਚਨ ਮਹਿ ਨਿਤ ਬਰਤਤ ਹੋ ਮੈ ਪੰਚ ਮਿਲਹਿ ਵਹਿ ਪੀਰਨਪੀਰ॥

Gurpratāpsūrya, III (I) vi, 41-42.

and apart from choosing the Baisākhi day for his coronation, therefore, he had other spectacular Sikh ceremonies performed by the revered Bedī Sāhib Singh of Unā to consecrate his sabotage, and he declared, which declaration and camouflage he scrupulously maintained throughout his life, that he was to be styled and addressed as His Majesty the Maharaja, only by the non-Sikhs, the Hindus, the Muslims and others, but under no circumstances, by the Sikhs, for the Sikhs, he was always, a simple, Singh Sahib, an honourable member of the Khalsa. Within a few years of his coronation, he reduced into desuetude the supreme authority of the Sikh polity, the *gurmatā*, and entrusted the control of the government of his expanding territories to a cabinet of his own choice, in accordance with the ancient Hindu monarchical tradition but *qua* his own person, in whom he had gathered all the power and authority of the state in accordance with the un-Sikh, Hindu doctrine, he never claimed independence from the *gurmatā*. On one occasion, when the Custodian-General of the Akāl Takht took exception to a certain conduct of his in private life, he readily and humbly bared his back for receiving public flogging as chastisement for his un-Sikh like moral failing, as the humblest member of the Khalsa would. Gradually, he replaced the original Sikh patent of Bandā Singh Bahādur on his coins and royal seals, with the cryptic, *Akālsahāya*, "May God help," without making it clear as to for whom the help of God was being officially invoked, for the Khalsa or for his Majesty, the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and in the latter half of his reign, when he became securer in his position, he had the heraldic device of the *pipal*, *ficus religiosa*, leaf minted on his coinage, to give his kingdom and dynasty a truly Brahmanic basis, divorced from the mores of Sikh polity. The royal "Daily Diaries" of the closing years of his reign are full of uninteresting and boring details of lavish and indiscriminate alms-givings to Brahmins, a duty which every Hindu monarch is enjoined to perform scrupulously and without fail in the ancient Hindu texts. Since the expansion, consolidation and protection of his empire throughout remained wholly dependent upon the arms of the Khalsa and the Sikh Army, he never styled his government as anything but the *Sirkār-i-khālsā*, the Khalsa Commonwealth. Anybody who saw through the game, was demurrer or opposed to these

un-Sikh trends of his policy, was tactfully, but without fail, eliminated from all effective voice in the councils of his government. Accordingly, General Hari Singh Nalwā, Bābā Sāhib Singh Bedi of Unā, and *Jathedār* Phūlā Singh Akālī, were kicked up or away or made otherwise ineffective. The antagonism inherent between his policy and aims, and the true principles and traditions of the Sikh polity, obliged him to debar virtually the employment of Sikhs in superior civil posts of his government, which were reserved for Muslims and Hindus only, as a rule. In pursuance of this policy of his, he raised the alien hill Dogrās, Dhyān Singh, Khushāl Singh and Gulāb Singh, almost from the gutter to positions of supreme authority in the civil apparatus of his government, and Tejā Singh, an insignificant Brahmin of the Gangetic Doāb, and Lāl Singh, another Brahmin from Gandhāra valley, were granted such influence which eventually raised them to the supreme command of the Sikh Army, and thus he dug his own grave, the grave of his descendants, and paved the way to the eventual enslavement of the Sikh people.

Once the true basis and the republican foundations of the *Sirkār-I-khālsā* were thus well knocked out, the way was cleared for personal ambitions and intrigues in complete disregard of public interest or national good. The Dogrās, the hill-aliens, indulged in low suicidal conspiracies to destroy and barter away the state in order to secure their own pre-eminence in the hill territories of the Sikh realm. The Chiefs of the state shamelessly placed their personal and family interests above the interests and safety of the state. The successors of Ranjit Singh themselves concentrated their entire individual energies to secure and strengthen their own illusory regal status even at the cost of the state's territorial integrity.

On the Sikh Army, the military arm of the Khalsa remained true to the Sikh polity approved and sanctified by the Gurus and they kept their faith and preserved their integrity upto the last. They could not save the Sikh state but in their defeat they upheld the eternal torch or true Sikh polity ensuring its emergence in the future on a securer and firmer basis.

Maharaja Kharak Singh the weak and gentlemanly successor of Ranjit Singh was slandered with the accusation that he wanted the *Sirkār-i-khālsā* to be reduced to vassalage of the British East India Company and thus his promising son, Prince Naunihāl Singh, was permanently estranged from his father by documentary forgeries purporting to be diplomatic communications between Kharak Singh and the Governor General at Calcutta and under these circumstances he was finished through slow poisoning. Prince Naunihāl Singh died or was murdered under dramatically suspicious circumstances the same day and thus Rani Chand Kaur, the widow of Kharak Singh became the Queen Regent of the State.

On the 20th July (1841) Clark reported the opinion of Dhean Singh that his endeavours do not afford any promise of stability of the government at Lāhore. The doubts that the raja expresses of the intentions of British government excite little corresponding sentiments in the Khalsa. They are more under the influence of a feeling of rancour towards him than of enmity to the British government. As it is usually understood amongst them that the British government rejected an offer of the half of Punjab from Chand Kaur to interfere to set her up as a Sovereign, they believe that the British government desire the adjustment of their internal distractions. They would like to get rid of the hill rajas first, after that they might not be disinclined for a rupture with the British government.⁷⁴

Queen- Regent Chand Kaur was soon murdered in the palace by her maid servants under circumstances that squarely fix the blame on the "hill rajas", Dhyān Singh in particular, and

on the 20th January (1842) Shere Singh obtained possession of the (Lāhore fort and on the 27th finally succeeded to the throne. The anarchy in Lāhore continuing, it was thought right to have a British force ready to help Shere Singh-in all 10,000 men under Major-General Lumely. Mr. Clark having informed the Governor General that he had a communication with a confidential advisor

⁷⁴ *Ellenborough Papers, Private Correspondence of Ellenborough with the Queen*, 30/12, II (i).

of Shere Singh with respect to affording of the aid of British troops on the condition of cession to the British of the Lāhore territories to the north of Sutlej and payment of 40 lakhs of rupees.⁷⁵

Next year Sher Singh was publicly murdered by regicide committed by his Sandhānwālīā kinsmen recently returned to Lāhore from under the protection and hospitality of the British officers and thus Rani Jindān, a young widow of Ranjit Singh became the Queen Regent with Dalip Singh, the infant son of Ranjit Singh, placed on the throne,

The Ranee (Jindan) now reviews the troops unveiled and dressed as a dancing women which pleases the old and gratifies the young but her irregularities are so monstrously indecent that the troops have held her horse and advised her to be more chaste or they would no longer style her the Mother of all the Sikhs.⁷⁶

and further,

It appears to be true by Broadfoot's reports that at one moment the plan of the Ranee was to have urged the troops to move against the English to force our interference, to disavow the act of the troops and to trust that we should restore their Government after we had destroyed the army on the basis of Lord Auckland's subsidiary arrangement of 1844.⁷⁷

What about the Chiefs of the Realm ?

These Chiefs are mostly adventurers with a few exceptions and in their desperate condition desire the destruction of the army and their restoration to power.⁷⁸

It was in this atmosphere and background that Rani Jindān brought over Raja Gulāb Singh, the Dogrā Chief from Jammu to preside over the final dissolution of the *Sirkār-i-Khālṣa* and the independence of a sovereign Punjab and Gulāb Singh was well qualified for this job.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Hardinge to Ellenborough* from Agra, dt. 23rd Oct., 1845, (Public Record Office, London).

⁷⁷ *Hardinge to Ellenborough* (Private), Calcutta, 3rd June, 1845, *op. cit.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

The man whom I have to deal with, Gulāb Singh, is the greatest rascal in Asia.⁷⁹

All these 'pillars' of the Sikh State, the *Sirkār-i-khālāsā*, were each pulling in directions opposite to each other, but they were united in one aim, their treacherous and perfidious desire to destroy the only true, genuine and loyal standard-bearer of the Khalsa, that was the Sikh Army. The contemporary state records, both of the Sikh state as well as the diplomatic documents of the East India Company, make no secret of the compulsive desire of the perfidious Dogrās to achieve what they referred to as, *tadāruk-i-Sikhān*, literally, 'repulsion of the Sikh people', but in its contextual meanings, 'destruction of the fighting machine of the *Sirkār-i-khālāsā*, 'atomisation of the collectivity of the Sikh nation', or as the modern diplomatic euphemism would put it, 'final solution of the Sikh problem'. Only such a destruction of the backbone of the Sikh power could remove obstacles that stood in the way of establishing institution of Hindu monarchy, primary of personal and family ambitions over the requirements of public interests and uncompromising hostility to the genuine Sikh impulses aiming at a social revolution that would lead to the emergence of an equalitarian, forward-looking and just social order. Perceiving the true nature of these anti-Sikh trends being persistently fostered by the civil apparatus of the *Sirkār-i-khālāsā*, by the successors of Ranjit Singh and the perfidious Dogrās, the Sikh Army during the closing months of 1845:

under the designation belonging to the Sikh Sect, before Ranjit Singh became a monarch, viz., *Khalsa Ji da Punth*, the Khalsa Punth, they assumed the Government (of the State).⁸⁰

And

They sent letters, bearing the seal inscribed merely with the name of God (*Ekonkār Wāhegurū Ji kī fateh*) to all civil authorities and military leaders and nobles and grandees of the Sikh Durbar (the royal court), requiring their presence and obedience.⁸¹

⁷⁹ *Hardinge Family Papers*, Penhurst, Kent, (Hardinge to his wife) Camp Lahore, 2nd March, 1845.

⁸⁰ *Broadfoot to Currie*, (September 22, 1845), 167/34-*Punjab Govt. Records*, Lahore.

⁸¹ *Kingdom of the Punjab*, p. 409.

It is on record that no person or no authority of the state either demurred or hesitated in rendering loyal obedience, such was the obvious justice and correctness of the position that thus emerged, namely, the sovereignty of the people as led by the Khalsa in repudiation of the monarchical claims of the successors of Ranjit Singh, the dynastic interests of the feudal and vested cliques and low, ignoble compulsive urges of the individual to assert himself in opposition to the social good and collective interests.

It was at this critical juncture of the evolution of Sikh polity that the evil, that is, the external and foreign influences in affairs of men and governments, the hubris of History, intervened to stifle the true Sikh political impulse. The British Governor General at Calcutta conveyed, in no uncertain terms, to the Sikh Durbār or the Royal Court, through formal diplomatic channels that the Hon'ble British East India Company would refuse to accord diplomatic recognition to any form of government at Lāhore except a monarchical Government. After Waterloo, the British statesmen in particular and the European statesmen in general, were firmly persuaded that monarchy was an enduring institution of divine sanction and that the first postulate of all political organisation was, the rule of 'legitimacy' which regulated the succession of state authority from one monarch to another.

It was thus that the genuine impulse of the Sikh polity was frustrated in its natural development and almost snuffed out.

The true standard-bearer of the Sikh polity as taught by the Sikh Gurus, which was the Khalsa Army, thus found itself between the devil and the deep sea, the anti-Sikh social impulses of the Sikh Durbār and the British menace to the existence and viability of the *Sirkār-i-khālsā* the political instrument which the Sikh people had forged for achieving the Sikh social aims of creating a just egalitarian, forward-looking, open and plural society as an exemplar for the future World Society. They were well-aware that the evil men of the Lāhore Durbār were plotting to cause their destruction by hurling them against the British and then stabbing them in the back.

Had the shrewd Committees of the armies (the *Khalsa pan-chayats*) observed no military preparation on the part of the

English, they would not have heeded the insidious exhortations of such mercenary men as Lal Singh and Tej Singh (to march against the English).⁸²

But the Sikh army knew that the British were plotting to destroy the *Sirkār-i-khālsā* and sovereignty of the Punjab as they knew that the Lāhore Durbār was plotting to destroy the Sikh Army.

The resolve of their rulers anyhow and by whatever means, to destroy them was known even by the Sikh army itself; but such had been the stern discipline of the *Pancha* . . . such the real belief that the intentions of the British were aggressive . . . and such their devotion to their mystic faith that one single dogged determination filled the bosom of each soldier, the word went round, 'We will go to the sacrifice' (*panth lai shahidī*).⁸³

The whole of this tragedy of history, this resistless, over-powering maelstrom of destruction, of singular banefulness for the historical evolution of this region of the world, finds its seed-bed in the split psyche of Ranjit Singh.

Ranjit Singh's true character as a spiritually mis-shapen Sikh became more than evident when at his death bed he put the arm of his 'heir-apparent' into the hands of the perfidious Dogrā Dhyān Singh, for safeguarding his dynasty, completely forgetting that the *Sirkār-i-khālsā* was a creation of the Khalsa arms and could not otherwise be maintained except through the cooperation and devotion of the Khalsa, and he displayed no realisation whatever of the fatal implication of the Dogrā power which he had planted amidst the Khalsa as a counter-check, so he thought, to the latter. Nor did he seem to recollect the basic tenet of Sikhism at his last hours on earth, that God, the *Guru-Akāl purkh*, alone is the dispenser of life and goods and that the sovereignty, the Raj, is the prerogative and responsibility of His Khalsa, to which dynasties and cliques are irreverent irrelevancies. The banal and farcical character of these proceedings was grotesquely highlighted by Dhyān Singh when he pretended to go through the movements of trying to immolate himself at the funeral pyre of his

⁸² J.D. Cunningham *History of the Sikhs*, p. 299.

⁸³ Hugh Pearse, *Memoirs of Alexander Gardner*, pp. 265-66.

erstwhile sovereign and the next morning embarked upon the conspiracy to destroy the entire line of Ranjit Singh's descendants to clear the way for putting his son, Hīrā Singh, on the throne of the Punjab. It was this Hīrā Singh, guided by the evil genius of Paṇḍit Jallā, with whom the much maligned Khalsa Army had to join issues in a mortal combat, which ultimately led to the destruction of that most remarkable body of men in arms that the human History has ever known, the Khalsa Army, and the enslavement of the Sikh people, within a period of ten years after the demise of Ranjit Singh. On this "sensual and debauched"⁸⁴ Hīrā Singh, was conferred "the title of the Blessed Son, of Good Fortune and Lofty Dignity—*Farzandikhās*, by Ranjit Singh in a rescript issued under his personal seal in Gurmukhī and endorsed by his Secretariat at Lāhore on 21st Baisākh, *Samvat* 1892 (April 1835), and in the same rescript Paṇḍit Jallā, a gambler and a debauch, a person of "extremely cruel and immoral character"⁸⁵ is described as, "the God-Man,—the *brahmasarūp* Paṇḍit Jallā, the special confidant of Raja Hīrā Singh."

It is puerile to argue that he endeavoured to consolidate the Sikh Commonwealth by absorbing the 'unruly' Sikh *misls*, for, in fact, he sabotaged the natural development of the whole Sikh polity, behind which lay the traditions of the people, of many millenia past, and which was purified and sanctified by the Sikh Gurus themselves. Given suitable opportunities, these traditions and instincts of the Sikh people were bound to flower into a political system akin to that developed by the Anglo-Saxon communities in Great Britain and the United States of America, and there was no question of a permanent chaos, of "no man's rule," as Dr. Jayaswal suggests in the paragraph quoted in the beginning of this chapter, and this "no man's rule" is certainly not inherent in the polity approved by Guru Gobind Singh, as the learned doctor hints.

The very basis of true democracy and republicanism is the dignity of individual as an end in itself and as the ultimate source of all civic and political power. It is this aspect of the Sikh character and

⁸⁴ Charles Francis, Massy, Col. *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, I, p. 314. And, Lepel, H. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, p. 262.

⁸⁵ Nūr Ahmad, Chiśtu Maulvi, *Tahqiqāt-i-Chiśtī*, p. 783.

demeanour which strikes his countrymen and some other unsympathetic observers as somehow anarchistic, generative of "no-man's rule." But, in fact, it is the self-respect, the awareness of his own ultimate significance in the Creation of God, which imparts to a Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh that olympian air and independence which fits ill with any totalitarian or autocratic monarchical system of organisation of power.

The Sikh soldiers are the finest men I have seen in Asia, bold and daring republicans.⁸⁶

It is to this trait of character, that, there occurs a reference, with regard to the citizens of the ancient Vaiśālī republic, in the ancient Buddhist *Lalitvistara*, that, they,

do not recognise anybody as low, middle, high or elder amongst them, and every one of them says, 'I am subject to none, 'I am a king'.⁸⁷

Monarchy of the Hindu pattern was not an answer to this attitude, spirit and character of the Sikhs but the democratic republican government of Guru Gobind Singh's precepts, with collegial leadership and responsibility, securely resting on the individual and national spirit of Sikh discipline. For, the concept of *Panth*, which is the cornerstone of Sikh polity, is the most effective check conceivable, against the individualism of the great cats of the jungle and the colourless collectivism of the bee-hive or the ant-hill.

⁸⁶ 'Hardinge to Ellenborough (Private), Calcutta, 19th March, 1846, *Hardinge Family Papers*, Penhurst, Kent (England).

⁸⁷ न उच्च मध्य निम्न ज्येष्ठानुपालिता एकैक एव मन्यन्ते अहं राजा अहं राजेति ।

Lalitvistara III. (Now edited and translated by Rajendraia Mitra, in *Bibliotheca Indica* 1896-98).

It was this tradition and spirit which re-appeared out of the subconscious racial mind of the people, in the 18th century during the Sikh resurgence in the Punjab, when every Sikh made the claim, *aham mur*, *aham mīr*, as his prototype the Vaisalian had made some 2500 years ago, *aham rāja aham rajeti*. This phase of Sikh resurgence is known to Sikh chroniclers, distortedly described by them as *hanne hanne mīr* (ਹੇਨੇ ਹੇਨੇ ਮੀਰੀ) i.e., in every horse saddle a king. *Mīr* is the Turkish equivalent of Sanskrit, *rāja*. It must always be remembered, however, that this *aham mīr* claim by the Sikhs, has at no state of their history, refused to submit to, and dared to defy, the collective will of the *Panth* duly formulated.

That this polity with the postulates which support it, has astounding inner strength was made evident when the well-trained mercenaries of the Gangetic Doāb and British soldiers seasoned in Peninsular wars of Europe invaded the cis-Sutlej territory of the Sikh empire after the demise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, led by the brave British veterans of Waterloo fame, 'backed by the might and prestige of the greatest expanding empire' of the 19th century,⁸⁸ and clashed with the Sikh soldiers, whose supplies of arms and rations had been cut off by a treacherous civil government at Lāhore under *dogrā* Gulāb Singh and whose non-Sikh generals had treacherously sold their tactical plans and their lives to the crafty enemy. In the battle of Mudki, on the 18th December, 1845, the Sikh army was considered as loser, simply because their titular General, traitor Lāl Singh Brahmin, after issuing attack orders, himself ran away with the munition stores, in accordance with a plan previously approved and agreed to, by the enemy. In the battle of Pherūshahar, on 21st December, 1845, although the Generals Lāl Singh and Tejā Singh shamelessly repeated their tactics of three days earlier, the Sikh soldiers, who had gone without food rations and who had been deprived of their reserve munitions through treachery, inflicted such heavy and crushing losses on the enemy that according to the admissions made by Sir Robert Cust himself in his Log Book entry, dated the 22nd December, 1845, the British command had formally⁸⁹ decided to "surrender unconditionally" before the Sikh army. It was again the ignominious sabotage and treachery of Lāl Singh and Tejā Singh which saved the British Indian empire the next morning when they deceived and persuaded the fresh reinforcements of the Sikh army to refrain from pressing the previous evening's advantage by attacking the badly beaten enemy. Before the Sabhrāon battle of 10th February, 1846, the civil government at Lāhore, through

⁸⁸ ਕਹਿਤ ਮਟਕ ਅਬ ਪੰਥ ਕੇ ਉਪਰ, ਝੁਕ ਰਹੀ ਨੰਦਨ ਸਾਰੀ, ਲਸਕਰ ਭਾਗੀ॥

Matak, *Jangnamah Singhan te Firangian* (ed.) Piara Singh Padam, *Chhand* 26, p. 90.

⁸⁹ "News came from the Governor-General that our attack of yesterday had failed, that affairs were desperate, that all the state papers were to be destroyed . . . This was kept secret by Mr. Curie, and we were concerting measures to make an unconditional surrender . . ."

Sir Robert Cust. N, *Linguistic and Oriental Essays*, VI, 48.

its head-executive, Gulāb Singh *dogrā* had already entered into secret *entente-cordiale* with the enemy that the Sikh civil government would render all possible help and aid to the enemy to inflict a defeat on the Sikh Army, with a view to facilitate occupation of Lāhore by the British forces.⁹⁰ The Sikh soldiers, led by the retired General Shām Singh of Aṭāri, fought the battle of Sabhrāon in full knowledge of their predicament, "to save the honour of their motherland, to preserve its independence and in so doing to win or die, as free men should"⁹¹, incidentally, a sentiment almost foreign and unknown to Indians and other Asiatic peoples in the first half of the 19th century. The ill-equipped, ill-fed and ingloriously-betrayed Sikh soldiers fought the enemy with such bravery and ferocity that the enemy had to make hurried special contacts with Generals Lāl Singh and Tejā Singh to save the situation for them, who readily obliged by retreating with munitions, guns and the battalions of *dogrā* and Gurkhā soldiers, across the Satluj, from where they trained a formidable battery of guns at the back of the fighting Sikh Army, after destroying the boat bridge on the river. Thus, the sure defeat of the enemy was converted into years of occupation of Lāhore by the British and consolidation of their hold on the country. When the remnants of Sikh soldiers, without any backing from their state, challenged in battle the British army at Chillianwālā on 13th January, 1849, the rout of the British was so decisive and complete that even patriotic British historians are obliged to admit that they were defeated. The great grand father of the writer of these lines, who fought in this battle, used to narrate that the Sikhs,

⁹⁰ The "understanding" with Gulab Singh was that "the Sikh army should be attacked by the English and that when beaten it should be openly abandoned by its own Government; and further that the passage of Sutlej should be unopposed and the roads to the capital laid open to the victors."

Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 32.

⁹¹ ਪੰਗਾਂ ਦਾਡੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਰੋਖੇ ਲਾਜ ਯਾਰੇ।
ਮੁੱਠ ਮੀਟੀ ਸੀ ਏਸ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਜੀ,
ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਖੋਲ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸਾਰਾ ਪਾਜ ਯਾਰੇ।
ਸ਼ਾਹ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ ਮੋਰੇ ਏਥੇ,
ਕਦੇ ਰਾਜ ਨ ਹੋਇ ਮੁਹਤਾਜ ਯਾਰੇ।

Shah Muhammad (1780-1862), *Jangnama Singhan te Firangian*, 'Chhand' 87, p. 77.

for full twelve hours persued the scattered British soldiers in all directions, who when overtaken would fall on their knees to beg for mercy, saying "*ham tumhārā gāi*" (I am like unto a defenceless cow to you), on the sight of a Sikh soldiers.⁹²

This spirit and this strength is inherent in the postulates on which Sikh polity is based and it would have changed the history of India, of the British empire, and consequently of the whole world, in the beginning of the 19th century, but for the intransigence, cupidity and ideological immaturity of one man, who, became Maharaja Ranjit Singh, with the sobriquet, "Lion of the Punjab" appropriated to himself, though it naturally and in all fairness should have thus distinguished all of them, who are the *singhs* of Guru Gobind Singh.

These postulates are three, which sharply separate them from their Hindu ancestors. The significance of the individual is the first, the equality of individuals, the second, and the validity of the socio-economic life as the proper context for the highest spiritual activity is the third. The Sikh republican democratic tradition is grounded in these postulates which ensure national strength and health.

In Hinduism and Buddhism, both, one of the basic metaphysical concepts is, most of which basic concepts Sikhism commonly shares with them, though as a rule, after reinterpreting them differently, that the fact of individuation is an evil *per se*, and *nirvāṇa* or *mukti* is just another name of its destruction. The stress of whole of the religious discipline and activity here is at the dissipation of individuality of which the personality is the flower. *Nirvāṇa* is the extinction of personality in Buddhism; and to a Hindu, the birth and growth of personality is another name for *samsara*, the chain of transmigration, the supreme evil which every Hindu must fight to destroy. Thus, in the whole of Hindu thought and attitude, the individuality or personality has no value intrinsically, it has secondary significance only, in the social context, as a limb of other secondary group-formations, such as,

⁹² "Chillianwala was not a victory. When the news of Chillianwala reached England, the nation was stricken with profound emotion. A long series of military successes had ill-fitted it to hear with composure of British guns and British standards taken and of British cavalry flying before the enemy . . ."

Adams, *Episodes of Anglo-Indian History*, pp. 228-29.

family, marriage-unit and the *varṇāśrama*, the caste-class, for the benefit of which group-formations an individual must sacrifice himself and may freely be sacrificed. This conceptual reasoning is really the basis of the concept of Hegelian State, which in recent times has given birth to totalitarian systems of political thought. It is this concept which also supports the doctrine and the institution of an autocratic divine Hindu monarch. The Sikh idea on the subject of individuality is in the main, in consonance with the Hindu notion that the individual is not a fixed entity living a single, isolated, once-for-all, life on earth, as the Western thought postulates. An individual is neither wholly himself by himself nor is he whole by himself. Thus, Sikhism is one with Hinduism in not accepting such an individual entity as the mainspring of political and religious traditions, as does the West. But here the stress is shifted in Sikhism. An individual is not an evil mirage to be destroyed and disregarded, but the very foundation on which the whole of human religious activity is to be built, and the full development of which is, in fact, the *summum bonum*, the *mukti*, the liberation. It is liberation from its limitations and sickness, and it is not its dissipation or destruction,

The individuality is a chronic disease no doubt, but its principle of health is also inherent in it⁹³

is declared in the *Guru Granth*. God Himself is viewed as Person in the Sikh thought, as is laid down in the opening formula in the *Guru Granth*. The *mukti* is not by thwarting or dissolution of personality but by its development, by its growth through struggle with evil in the socio-political context. "Live a life of endeavour and enterprise and thus produce and earn your living, for, this is the happy way of life."⁹⁴ Thus, the concept of the Rights of Man, which has played such a dynamic part in the modern growth of democratic political thought in Europe, finds a warm, full-blooded and sympathetic echo in the Sikh heart, while to the Hindu mind and attitude, it is no more than a vanity and an illusion.

⁹³ ਹਉਮੈ ਦੀਰਘ ਰੋਗੁ ਹੈ ਦਾਰੂ ਭੀ ਇਸ ਮਾਹਿ॥

Var Asā M 1, GGS, p. 466.

⁹⁴ ਉਦਮੁ ਕਰੇਦਿਆ ਜੀਉ ਤੂੰ ਕਮਾਵਦਿਆ ਸੁਖ ਭੁੰਚੁ॥

Ibid., p. 522.

The second postulate is the equality of man in which the Sikh democratic republican tradition is securely grounded. The Hindu concept of karma, the Law of Universal Causation, is accepted by the Sikhs, as both axiomatic and demonstrable in the deep down recesses of human heart. "This Law is there in the deepest recesses of human heart."⁹⁵ But to the Hindu social classes and the economic apartheid of the *Varnāśramadharma* is the visible expression of the Law of Karma, and, therefore, social classes and inequalities are eternal and God-ordained. Sikhism repudiates this nexus between the karma and social inequalities based on iniquitous. Karma expresses itself, according to Sikhism, not in, the so-called, pre-determined individual's significance and place in human society, but in his gifts and powers and the consequences, social and personal, to which these gifts and powers inevitably lead.

Hearken, my soul, to this deep truth,
The human birth is by karma.

And the joys and sorrows that flow from it should be accepted as such.⁹⁶

Thus, though men are not equal in ability, they are entitled to equal judgement and value, and social equality. Another consequence of their interpretation of the Law of Karma is the Hindu evaluation of women. Although she is treated with great tenderness and reverence in the Hindu texts, through the ages, her social position has always been inferior and subordinate to man in Hindu Society. According to the best *Smritis*, she is always a minor at law.

As a girl, she was under the tutelage of her parents, as an adult, of her husband and as a widow, of her sons. Even under the liberal rules of Buddhism, a nun, however, advanced in the faith, was always subordinate to the youngest novice among the brethren. Early law-books assess a woman's wergild as equivalent to that of a Śūdra, whatever her class.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ॥

Ibid., p. 1.

⁹⁶ ਤੂ ਸੁਣਿ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰੰਮਾ ਪੁਰਬਿ ਕਮਾਇਆ॥ ਸਿਰਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਸੁਖ ਸਰੰਮਾ ਦੇਹਿ ਸੁ ਤੂ ਭਲਾ॥

Tukhārī, M 1, GGS, p. 1107.

⁹⁷ A.L. Basham, *Wonder That was India*, p. 177.

This inferior social status of the women is also regarded as a visible expression of the Law of Karma by Hinduism. As, however, the Greek discovered by experience, as was evidenced in the Islamic society, equality cannot endure for long if it is confined only to the male half of the society. Sikhism, as already shown, not only repudiates this nexus between karma and the social status of women, but declares her 'as the very essence of social coherence and progress' and condemns any suggestion of 'relegating her to an inferior status in any manner', whatsoever.⁹⁸ This ideological position of the Sikhs is another source of vitality and strength for their democratic republican traditions and polity.

The third postulate of Sikhism, which sharply distinguishes them from their Hindu brethren, is their attitude to the material universe and the socio-political activity which is grounded in it. Sikhism accepts the concepts of the *samsara* and *maya*, but interprets them otherwise. Sikhism agrees that the universe, as revealed through physical senses, the sensibilia, and as moulded into perceptual entities and patterns is not in accord with the fundamental Reality and that the universe so revealed is appearances as contrasted with the Reality. Besides, Sikhism, in agreement with Hinduism, repudiates the scientific determinism of Western scientific outlook which postulates that, real is that which is capable of invoking sensori-motor reactions in man. Sikhism, however, is not world-renouncing like Hinduism and it does not look upon the material universe as a mere dream and insignificant phantom, a play of the gods in their imagination, of no abiding interest to a serious-minded person. Sikhism accords to the material universe the same essence of reality as belongs to the ultimately Real, though not the same immaculation, and intensity. "All that has been created by the Real is real."⁹⁹ The Reality is not somewhere away and apart from the material universe but is revealed to man through a change of mode

" ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ॥
ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੇ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥

Var Asa, M 1 GGS, p. 473.

" ਆਪਿ ਸਤਿ ਕੀਆ ਸਭੁ ਸਤਿ॥

Sukhmani, M 5, GGS, p. 294.

of his perception.¹⁰⁰ The transformation of this mode of perception is the sole purpose of religious discipline. It follows, therefore, according to Sikhism, that there is no true and genuine religious activity except in the socio-political context.

The ultimate Reality is present in the human socio-political activity; endeavour to realise this through an understanding of the Testament of the Guru.¹⁰¹

It is out of this divergence of Sikh thought from the Hindu thought that the urgency and extroversion of the Sikh character springs, in sharp contrast to the supreme unconcern and self-absorption of the Hindu.

This is the basic question : O, man what have you done, after taking human birth on earth?¹⁰²

The human life on earth is a rare opportunity; it cannot be repeated very often.¹⁰³

The night is wasted in sleep and the day in eating; this human life is precious like a jewel but is given away for a mere conchshell.¹⁰⁴

Another attitude of Sikhism, though not basically peculiar to Sikhism in contradistinction to Hinduism, being more a matter of stress, is faith in reason, as the only reliable guide in human affairs, and this stress is a necessary corollary of the Sikh view of Reality and the ontological status of empirical knowledge. It is a basic ingredient of the Sikh attitude to life, as laid down by Guru Gobind Singh, that he,

¹⁰⁰ ਬੁਝਨਹਾਰ ਕਉ ਸਤਿ ਸਭ ਹੋਇ।

Ibid., p. 285.

¹⁰¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਹਰਿਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਬੁਝਹੁ ਸਬਦ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ।

Kanare ki Vâr, M 4, GGS, p. 1314.

¹⁰² ਏ ਸਰੀਰਾ ਮੇਰਿਆ ਇਸ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇਕੈ ਕਿਆਤੁਧੁ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇਆ।

Ramkali M 3, GGS, p. 921.

¹⁰³ ਕਬੀਰ ਮਾਨਸ ਜਨਮੁ ਦੁਲੰਭੁ ਹੈ ਹੋਇ ਨ ਬਾਰੈ ਬਾਰ।

Śloka Kabir, *Ibid.*, p. 1366.

¹⁰⁴ ਰੋਣਿ ਗਵਾਈ ਮੋਇ ਕੈ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ਖਾਇ।

ਹੀਰੇ ਜੈਸਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਹੈ ਕਉਡੀ ਬਦਲੇ ਜਾਇ।

Ibid., p. 156.

a Sikh, "must cultivate fortitude and patience and make reason as his guide in all matters."¹⁰⁵ This respect for, and reliance on, reason, makes the Sikhs peculiarly fit for politico-democratic activities, and renders them instinctively sympathetic to the modern democratic tradition.

The Constitution Act of India promulgated in 1950, indeed, seems to have taken silent cognisance of these basic resistances embedded in the Hindu thought and soul, to the democratic idea and political set up, and it is beased on the postulates of Sikhism, as contrasted with those of Hinduism.

But the really important question is this : Will the Hindu soul, unless it accepts the teachings of the Sikh Gurus without reservation, sincerely accept and adapt itself to the basic postulates of the Indian Constitution?

In what way may this question be answered? By applying the following three tests, in the main : (1) Do those who come into power through the electoral democratic device, in their day to day functioning, regard themselves as the instruments of the Will of the people, concretised in the impersonal legislation and rules, or do they regard themselves as repositories of power in their own personal rights? (2) Do the judicial organs of the state, apply and implement the law of the land as instruments of the spirit and letter of the law itself or, as the famous phrase says, they are 'corrupt with the hope of promotion and awestruck by the frown of power?' (3) Do the public and the Press readily react to and fearlessly protest against despotic and corrupt attitudes and acts of commission and omission, of the executive and judicial authorities, or do they obsequiously accept them as manifestations of the basic nature of the State power, as ordained by gods, and therefore, outside the day to day concern and vigilance of the citizens?

Unambiguous answers to these three questions alone can make it clear whether Indians are yet ready and fit for the Sikh Raj, or whether the ancient Hindu soul of autocracy and tyranny is reasserting itself, surreptitiously, for the Prince of Darkness himself cannot conceive of

¹⁰⁵ ਧੀਰਜ ਧਾਮ ਬਨਾਇ ਇਹੈ ਤਨ ਬੁਧਿ ਸੁ ਦੀਖਕ ਜਿਉ ਉਜੀਆਰੈ।

Kṛṣṇavatār, DG, p. 570.

a worse despotism than that camouflaged as democracy and a more terrible tyranny than that clothed in law.¹⁰⁶

How does this Sikh Raj fit into the two world-contending political systems of today, the Totalitarianism and the Democratic liberalism? For, a polity is nothing unless practical and germane to the live problems of mankind. Totalitarian systems, we might say, are those, which repudiate the liberal and rational tradition in favour of an attitude of mind, the main ingredients of which are (a) distrust of reason, (b) denial of possibility of universal judgements on morals and politics, (c) denial of the idea that the individual has any rights, except those which he enjoys at the pleasure of the group to which he belongs, and (d) denial that the national state has any duties or obligations towards other states. These ideas, *par excellence*, find a concrete expression in the Communist State, the theoretical aims of which favour a Universal State, founded on social equality and rigid social justice achieved through regulation of all human activities in such a manner as to produce the maximum social good. The opposite picture to this Communist utopia is furnished by the Democratic liberalism, which dreams of a World Society in which individual freedom is at its maximum, and in which the social good comes about through the release of personal energies. Such a World Society would find its logical constitutional expression in a Universal Federal State and a universal Customs Union.

¹⁰⁶ For, "What constitutes a State?

Not highraised battlements, or laboured mound,
Thick wall or moated gate,
Nor, cities fair, with spires and turrets crown'd,
No, men, high minded men,
With powers as far above dull beasts endued
in forest, brake or den,
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude . . .
Men who their duties know,
But know their rights, and knowing dare maintain,
Prevent the long aimed bow,
And crush the tyrant, while they rend the chain."

—Alcacus, *The State*, (c. 660 B.C.)
as adopted by Sir William James.

Whether the doctrine of Totalitarianism, which encompasses Fascism, Nazism, Leninism, Stalinism and Maoism is a logical development of Marxian thought and Hegelian philosophy is not a matter which is strictly relevant here, though it is difficult to reconcile Marx's temperament which was essentially humanistic and which implicitly recognised the worth of individual personality, with the totalitarian reality which uses the goal of Marxian apocalypse for securing absolute power for individuals or groups of individuals, a power to be exercised for its own sake. The crucial point is whether the inner autonomy of the individual should be destroyed so that the last semblance of human dignity is erased and man is reduced to a mere cipher, in the name of the amorphous chimera of the classless society or, it should be given the freest scope to enlarge itself so that its resistances to, and contradictions with, the social good may gradually but surely disappear.

From what we have said in the foregoing pages, there should become recognisable the guidelines by which it can be judged which pattern of political organisation, as it develops gradually in its various stages of evolution, is fit to receive recognition and accord by the Sikh polity.

CHAPTER XII

THE HINDU CASTE AND SIKHISM

The most obvious characteristics of an ordinary Hindu are : (1) he worships or, at least, believes in a plurality of gods; (2) he looks upon the cow as a sacred, and not merely as an economically useful or indispensable animal; (3) he accepts Brahmanical supremacy; and (4) Caste system. So complex are the systems of belief and credo—if indeed, the term 'system' is at all applicable to the variety of beliefs and credos, which the Hindu mind has disembodyed throughout the countless centuries—that go under the name of Hinduism, that it has been almost impossible to arrive at a suitable definition of Hinduism and of a Hindu. A writer records¹ that when he asked Chandra Sen, a Bengali poet, as to how he would define a Hindu, the poet attempted a number of definitions, only to abandon them as soon as they were attempted, and eventually he came to the conclusion that a Hindu was one who was born in India of Indian parents on both sides and who accepted and obeyed the rules of his caste.

What is this 'caste', which is the accepted desideratum of all forms of Hinduism, and with reference to which a Hindu must, in the last analysis, be differentiated from a non-Hindu, in common estimation?

When Portuguese came to India in the 16th century, they found that the Hindus were divided into many groups, separate from each other, and they called such groups *castas*, meaning clans or tribes. Even since the name has stuck and has become a synonym for the Hindu social groups. It has not been generally appreciated that there is a two-fold basis of group-division amongst the Hindus, (1) the *varna*, the class, and (2) the *jati*, the caste proper. The former is God-ordained, primaeval and eternal, while the latter is a system of groups

¹ Anderson, J.D., *The People of India*, p. 33.

within the *varna* and is characterised by and perpetuated through (a) endogamy, (b) commensality and (c) craft-exclusiveness. Endogamy is the rule that the marriage is only legitimate within the social group: commensality, that food is only to be received from, or eaten in the presence of members of the same or a higher social Hindu group, and craft-exclusiveness, that each Hindu must live by the trade or profession of his own group and must not take up that of another.

Undoubtedly, *jati* developed later than the *varna*, but it is impossible to show conclusively that the former developed out of the latter. Many factors, racial historical and economic moulded the stratification of *jati-groups* in the course of thousand of years, with a view to make them subserve a single cultural system, that of Hindu social order.

The basic principle of the *varna* doctrine is that the division of the human society into four-fold classes is innate and it cannot be annulled. This four-fold division is best reflected in and understood by the Hindu society, and the rest of the humanity has appreciated it but imperfectly. Manu admits² that the martial and warlike tribes, hovering on the fringes of the Aryan civilisation and the Hindu habitat, capable of occasional incursions of a more or less violent nature, into the sacred land of the Hindus, including the Greeks (*Yavanas*), the Scythians (*Sakas*), the Persians (*Pahlavis*) belong to the *kshatriya varna*, who had been corrupted through neglect of their *dharma*, the social and ethical duties of their class, but who could be received back into the Hindu Society by their adopting the orthodox way of life after performing appropriate penitential sacrifices and ceremonies. The basic authority for the *varna* classification is contained in the *Rgveda* itself, in the 90th hymn of the Xth Book :

When they divided Man, how many did they make him ? What was his mouth ?

What his arms ? what are called his thighs and feet.³

² *Manavadharmashastra*, X, 44.

³ यत् पुरुषं व्यदधुः कतिधा व्यकल्पयन् ।
मुखं किमस्य की बाहू का उरु पादा उच्येते ।

And the answers to these questions follow :

The Brahman was his mouth, the *rajanya* was made from his arms, the *vaisya* became his thighs, the *sudra* was born from his feet.⁴

While the *varna* is based on innate, predestined qualitative differentiation, the *jati* is primarily functional; its principle being that certain civil and religious rights and duties are implicated irrevocably in the social group in which one is born. This is implied by the term *varnasramadharmā*, itself. Its implication is that dharma is not the same for all, though, indeed, there is a common Dharma, a general norm of ethical conduct, valid for everybody, but there is also a dharma to each class, each group and each stage of life of an individual. The dharma of the man of high birth is not that of the common man, and the dharma of the student is not that of the aged man. There are no ethical social values of universal validity.

This compartmental social ethics of Hinduism is not the same as that of the Buddhist relativistic theory. In *Aggannasutra*, it is pointed out that Society and ethical rules undergo change from time to time.⁵ Buddhism projects a theory of Ethics which is not an absolutistic one, and it is an approach which would be readily acceptable to a Lenin or a modern Marxist, while Hinduism does not recognise that dharma can be reduced to the doctrine of equal validity for different conventions in different countries or different social systems. Hinduism upholds an absolutistic universal code of human conduct, valid for all times in all countries and under all circumstances.

The Principle of *Varnasramadharmā* which inspires and validates the social stratification of *jati* is laid down by Manu as follows :

He, the Resplendent, for the sake of protecting all the creatures, assigned separate duties to those born of His mouth, arms, thighs and feet. Teaching and studying the Vedas making sacrifices and assisting others in so doing, making gifts and receiving of gifts:

⁴ ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद् बाहू राजन्यः कृतः ।
ऊरु तदास्य यद्वैश्यः पयां शूद्रो अजायत ॥

Ibid., X. 90.12

⁵ "What is reckoned immoral at one time, *adharma-sammatam*, may be reckoned to be moral *dharmā-sammatam*, at another time."

Aggannasutra, iii. 89

these He assigned to the Brahmins. The protection of the people, sacrificing and studying of Vedas, non-attachment to sensual pleasures and giving of gifts : these He prescribed for the kshatriyas. The protection of the cattle, giving of gifts, sacrificing and study of Vedas, trade, banking and agriculture, to the Vaisyas. The God allotted only one duty to the sudras : to serve without demur, the members of all the classes mentioned above.⁶

It is this *Varnasramadharma* which flows from the eternal, genetical fourfold division of the human Society, and entails separate and different religious social duties for different classes, and which sustains the economic and social apartheid explicit in the *jati* groups. When one class assumes the duties and obligations of another, when one *jati* group interlopes into the economic reserve and monopoly of the other, it is then that the Dharma is said to be polluted, *dharmasya glani bhavati*⁷, which pollution results in the greatest calamity of all, the Confusion of Castes, *varnasankara*. It is for this reason that, *Bhagavadgita* stresses that "better is one's own avocation, howsoever defective, than another's well-performed, for in performing that which is his pre-ordained obligation, one incurs no sin."⁸ *Manusmriti* warns that if this social and economic apartheid is not respected, the dog

-
- * सर्वस्यास्य तु सर्गस्य गुप्त्यर्थं स महाद्युतिः ।
 मुखबाहुरूपं ज्ञानां पृथक्कर्माण्यकल्पयत् ॥
 अध्यापनमध्ययनं यजनं याजनं तथा ।
 दानं प्रतिग्रहं चैव ब्राह्मणानामकल्पयत् ॥
 प्रज्ञानां रक्षणं दानमिज्याध्ययनमेव च ।
 विषदेष्ट्वं प्रसूतिश्च क्षत्रियस्य समासतः ॥
 पशूनां रक्षणं दानमिज्याध्ययनमेव च ।
 वणिक्पथं कुसीदं च वैश्यस्य कृषिमेव च ॥
 एकमेव तु शूद्रस्य प्रभुषा कर्म समादिशत् ।
 एतेषामेव वर्णानां शुल्भभागनसूयया ॥

Manusmriti 1.87-91.

- * धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति

Bhagavadgita.

- * श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठिताह ।
 स्वधर्मे निघनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥

Bhagavadgita, III. 35.

and the crow would devour the sacred materials of the sacrifices, the gods would withdraw their favour and the human Society would disintegrate into ruins."

These are the doctrinal and theoretical bases of the caste system of the Hindus, though the ideal set forth in the scriptural text has at no time been wholly reached, and has at no time been without its critics. That these doctrinal and theoretical bases merely justify the functional perpetuation of the human society on the political and social levels and are not final measures of moral excellence or spiritual destiny of the individual has been conceded in the more profound Hindu thought, throughout, and from the beginning. *Bhagavadgita* which contains a subtle and philosophical justification of the *varna*, and indirectly, of the *jati*-patterns of social organisation makes it clear that spiritual emancipation of the individual is contingent not upon his station in this divinely pre-ordained pattern of social organisation, but upon his moral refinement and inner psychological attitudes which he brings to bear upon the performance of the duties and obligations of his social grade :

Those who worship God through proper performance of the duties and obligations of their pre-ordained social grade, *svakarmanatambhyaricaya*, verily, they are emancipated, *siddhimvindati*.⁹

What is this 'proper performance', which alone is capable of conferring emancipation upon the individual? Not the accident of his high birth, not strict observance of rules pertaining to the duties of his social grade, but the inner spiritual attitude of dedication of his life-activities to God :

Detach thou completely from thy activities and seek refuge in Me alone. Verily, I shall cleanse thee of all sin, rescue thee from all fear and make thee free and pure.¹⁰

⁹ यतः प्रवृत्तिमूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।।
स्व कर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ।।

Ibid., XVIII.46.

¹⁰ सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ।।

Ibid., 66.

If spiritual emancipation is not contingent upon one's status in the God-ordained social pattern, even so, the moral excellence of an individual is not to be judged with reference to this status alone.

O, King of Nagas, listen, truthfulness, charity, forgiveness, ethical conduct, selfcontrol, and mercy, where these are, he a brahmin is. If these are present in one born in the lowest caste, and not in one born in the higher caste, the former is not low, and the latter is not high. The presence of the aforementioned virtues maketh a brahmin, and their absence, a sudra.¹¹

It is not, therefore, the real essence of the Hindu caste system, as is sometimes supposed, that it reduces ethics to a mechanical science and makes it theoretically possible for the large mass of individuals at the base of the pyramid of Hindu Society to abandon all hope of spiritual solace or progress. That, in theory as well as in practice, it insists on perpetual social gradation and economic apartheid is not in doubt. That in practice and theory both, it seeks to confine higher cultural refinements to the pre-ordained higher classes, which refinements must be totally denied by divine and draconic politically enforceable laws, also must be admitted.

It has often been claimed in recent times that many prophets and savants of India in the past, have repudiated this caste system. It is the central purpose of this Chapter, briefly, to examine the nature of such "repudiations" and to explain in this background the real significance of the Sikh doctrine on the subject.

Buddhism and Jainism of the pre-Christian millennium, repudiated the inerrancy and eternal status of the Veda as Revelation, *Sruti*, self-evident truths, and they repudiated the superiority of the Brahmins, both of which heresies place them outside the pale of Hinduism. It is

¹¹ सत्यं दानं क्षमा शन्तिमानृशंस्यं तपो घृणा ।।

दुश्चरन्ते यत्र नार्गेदं ब्राह्मण इति स्मृतः ।।

शूदे तु यद्वेत्सलक्षम द्विजे तच्च न विद्यते ।

न वै शूदो भवेच्छूदो ब्रह्मणेर च ब्राह्मणः ।।

यदै तल्लक्षयते सर्प वृत्तं से ब्राह्मणः स्मृतः ।

यदै तन्न भवेत्संय ते शूद इति निर्दिशेत् ।।

often asserted that Buddhism, and the same is assumed of Jainism also, preached against the caste system. This is incorrect and is based upon a faulty appreciation of the teachings of Gautam, the Buddha, and Jain practices.

Here is a typical teaching of the Buddha on the subject of caste system and the relation in which Buddhism stands to it :

These, Sire are the four castes (*chaturvarna*) the kshatriya, the brahmin, the vaisya and the shudra. Of these two are laid down as superiors, the kshatriya and the brahmin, that is, in regard to the way they are dressed, greeted by standing up and by palms joined in salutation, and by the way they are treated. There are these five qualities to be striven after, faith, health, honesty, energetic living, wisdom. The four castes may be endowed with the five qualities that are to be striven after, and this would be for them, for a long time, blessing and a happiness.... In the case of the four castes, if they are endowed with the five qualities that are to be striven after, if they would have right striving, I would say that in such a case, there is not any difference.¹²

This does not repudiate the divinely ordained functional bases of the Hindu social system; rather, it takes the system for granted as somehow self-evident. All that this teaching lays down is that there is a common dharma for all Buddhist laymen, a doctrine never denied by the staunchest Upholder of the caste system, and that the right striving, *samyam*, the inner psychological attitude is the essence of religious life, which is precisely the doctrine laid down in the ancient Hindu scriptures.

The Dharma (of Buddhism) has its immanent correlative in every man's *svadharma* (the duties entailed by the God ordained social status of the individual) by which his natural inclination and proper functions, *attano kamma*, are determined; and it is only greed or ambition that leads to the disparagement of the nativity by which a man is normally protected. (*Suttanipata*, 314-15). It is mentioned because of currency of erroneous opinion that the Buddha "attacked" the caste system. What he actually did was to

¹² *Majjhima-nikaya*, II. 218-30.

distinguish the Brahmin by mere birth from the true Brahmin by gnosis, and to point out that religious vocation was open to a man of any birth. (*Anguttarnikaya*. III. 214). There is nothing new in that. Caste is a social institution and the Buddha was mainly speaking for those whose pre-occupations are no longer social.¹³

Buddha's order was open to all classes alike, but this does not imply that he was adverse to caste . . . or denied that men are divided into categories determined by their deeds in other births.¹⁴

And though Buddha denied that Brahmins were superior by birth to others, he did not preach against caste...¹⁵

'The essence of caste is that inequality of birth has a divine sanction and the Hindu social organisation has a religious basis.'¹⁶ 'This the Buddha never questioned or repudiated.'¹⁷

The Lingayats and the Vaisnavas are also sometimes mentioned as those who repudiated the Hindu caste system.

Lingayats are a puritanical sect of Shaivism, founded by Basava (Sanskrit, *Vrsabha*) who by some accounts, was a minister to the King Bijjala (1156-1167). This Bijjala had usurped the throne of Chalukyas of Kalyani in 1156, and is described as a vigorous persecutor of the sect of Basava, also known as *Virshaivas*, the Heroic Saivites. Basava repudiated the caste supremacy of the Brahmins, as well as the later Hindu sacred literature except two *Puranas*, the *Skandapurana* and the Tamil work of Sekkiler (9th century) called *Periyapurana*. They do not, in theory, reject the Vedas, but reject the central activity of the Vedic religion, the *yajna*, and in common with post-Vedic Hinduism accept worship, the puja, as the central activity of religion, and this puja must be of the *linga*, the emblem of Shiva. Every member of this sect must carry the *linga* or *lingam* emblem tied around his neck or arm to be parted from the body under no circumstances. Their esoteric teachings are given in the book,

¹³ Ananda K., Coomarswamy, *The Living Thoughts of Gautam, the Buddha*, p. 37.

¹⁴ Charles Eliot, Sir, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, II, pp. 175-76.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, I, XXII.

¹⁶ Anand K., Coomarswamy, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷ Charles Eliot, Sir, *loc. cit.*

Prabhulingalila, which enunciates that the deity ought to live in the believer's soul as it does in the gross *lingam* and they believe that Lingayats are beyond the hold of the *samsara*, the cycle of transmigrations, for when they die, their souls go straight to the *shivapuri*, the Abode of Shiva, and thus antyesthi rituals, or Hindu rites for the dead, are unnecessary in the caste of Lingayats. They bury their dead like semites instead of cremating them and their own priests, *jangamas*, replace the Brahmins. Bassava had taught that all his followers, the true believers, including women, were equal and even widow-remarriage was permissible.

This teaching has nothing new in it as it merely asserts, as does the *Bhagavadgita*, and as did Gautam, the Buddha, that caste-gradation does not affect the domain of belief. It does not repudiate the social institution of the caste system :

In doctrine the Lingayats remain faithful to their original tenets and do not worship any god or goddess except Shiva in the form of *lingam*, though they show respect to *Ganesa*, and other deities as also to the founder of their sect. But in social matters it is agreed by all observers, that they show a tendency to reintroduce caste and to minimise the differences separating them from more orthodox sects. . . Though converts from all castes are still accepted, it was found at the last census (1911) that well-to-do Lingayats were anxious to be entered under the name of *Virshaiva brahmins*, *kshatriyas*, etc. and did not admit that caste distinctions are obliterated among them.¹⁸

Albiruni, writing in A.D. 1030 about north western India mentions Shiva and Durga only incidentally but devotes separate chapters to Narayana and Vasudeva in which he gives copious quotations from *Vishnupurana* and *Bhagavadgita* to give an account of from Vaishnavism. It is clear that he considered that by giving an account of Vaishnavism, he had described the representative form of Hinduism. Vaishnavism, therefore, is as ancient as Hinduism, which assumed concrete forms in the Gupta period of Indian chronology and 4th and 5th centuries of the Christian era.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, II, p. 227.

The beliefs of all Vaisnavite sects are based on some form of qualified monoism, *vishistadvaita*, or dualism, *dvaita*. Their practices consist of worship of God in the form of incarnations of the archetypal Visnu. They reject the vedic activity of *yajna*, in toto and make bhakti, the emotional adoration of the deity, as the basis of salvation, loving condescension or grace being the chief characteristic of their deity. They accept the authority of the Veda and derive their metaphysical theories from special interpretations of the *Brahmasutras* of Badrayanarishi, *Bhagavadgita* and *Bhagavatapurana* are their special scriptures. Ramanuja (1017-1137), Ramanand (b. 1299), Vallabhacharya (1470-1522) and Chaitanya (1485-1535) are the doyens of Vaisnavism, a clear exposition of which is already given in the *Bhagavadgita* of the 3rd century B.C.

The so called rejection of caste-system by these Vaishnavites is no more than a reiteration of the position taken up in *Bhagavadgita* with reference to the Hindu social system, and as we have seen *Bhagavadgita* is the most uncompromising upholder of the caste system, Ramanuja in his *shribhassya*¹⁹ asserts that although all souls are of the same nature in so far as they are of the same substance as God, nevertheless, some men are entitled to read Vedas and some are not. 'All fire', he adds, 'is of the same nature, but fire taken from the house of a Brahmin is pure, whereas that taken from a cremation ground is impure. Even so the soul is defiled by being associated with a low caste body'.

Ramanand wrote no treatise but various hymns are attributed to him, one of which is included in the *Guru Granth* in which he preaches faith in and adoration of one Formless God as the central activity of religion, which is the Sikh doctrine and which, no doubt, is the reason for the inclusion and preservation of this hymn in the Sikh scripture:

Where shall we go to, O, where
When there is plenty to entertain
and occupy in the house itself.
My mind is confused and my
reason bewildered.

¹⁹ II, ii, 46-47.

One day, however, I collected my energies,
 and I gathered sandal-paste, scented
 sprinkle and other sweet smelling things.
 And thus I set out to offer worship to my
 Lord, the god.
 The Guru then advised : 'Look carefully,
 the God is within you.'
 And so it is. We go in search for Him
 in holy waters and Images of stone.
 But He, the God, is everywhere alike.
 And now, I have carefully probed into
 the meanings of scriptures and sacred writings.
 And this is what I have understood :
 'One needs to go there if He is not here'.
 I adore you, O, my True Guru, for,
 You have calmed my troubled mind and set
 my doubts at rest.
 Ramanandswami now is blessed with nearness to God.
 The Word of the Guru destroys the shackles
 of countless karma.²⁰

His famous teaching on the subject of the caste system goes no father than that, "in the final reckoning the caste has no relevance; God owns all those who love him,"²¹ This is precisely the teachings of *Bhagavadgita*, and it does not repudiate the caste system. Kabir, Pipa and Ravidas, the shoe-maker, whose hymns also find place in the *Guru Granth*, belong to the top twelve followers of Ramanand and the "more devout among his followers belong to an order divided

²⁰ ਕਤ ਜਾਈਐ ਰੇ ਘਰ ਲਾਗੇ ਰੰਗੁ॥ ਮੇਰਾ ਚਿਤੁ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਮਨੁ ਭਇਓ ਪੰਗੁ॥
 ਏਕ ਦਿਵਸ ਮਨ ਭਈ ਉਮੰਗੁ॥ ਅਸਿ ਚੰਦਨ ਚੋਆ ਬਹੁ ਸੁਗੰਧੁ॥
 ਪੂਜਨ ਚਾਲੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਠਾਇ॥ ਸੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬਤਾਇਓ ਗੁਰ ਮਨ ਹੀ ਮਾਹਿ॥
 ਜਹਾ ਜਾਈਐ ਤਹ ਚਲ ਪਖਾਨ॥ ਤੂ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਸਮਾਨ॥
 ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਸਭ ਦੇਖੇ ਜੋਇ॥ ਊਹਾ ਤਉ ਜਾਈਐ ਜਉ ਈਹਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੈ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਤੇਰ॥ ਜਿਨਿ ਸਕਲ ਬਿਕਲ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਕਾਟੇ ਮੇਰ॥
 ਰਾਮਨੰਦ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਰਮਤ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਧੁ ਕਾਟੈ ਕੋਟਿ ਕਰਮ॥

Basant, Ramanand, GGS, p. 1195.

²¹ ਜਾਤਿ ਪਾਤਿ ਪੂਛੇ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਈ, ਹਰਿ ਕਓ ਭਜੈ ਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਹੋਈ॥

into four classes of which the highest is reserved only for the Brahmins.²² Vallabhacharya and Chaitanya do no more than give their own definitions of the essence of religious activity through their doctrines of *Pustimarga* and *Sankirtan* respectively and while they declare that these forms of religious activity are open to all castes without distinction, they nowhere repudiate the real caste system, the essence of which is that it gives religious sanction and theological validity to inequality of birth.

Before considering the attitude of Sikhism towards it, two recent attempts made by the Hindus to throw off the yoke of the caste system must be examined, the Arya Samaj and the teachings of Gandhi culminating in certain provisions of the Constitution Act of India of 1950.

It was not to be expected that the acute and subtle Hindu mind would, at any stage, fail to recognise that the promulgation of a new metaphysics, establishment of a new sect, or a socio-religious reform in Hinduism or amongst Hindus is legitimate and permissible only through a new interpretation, and not by way of annulment and new dispensation such as would necessarily result in a hiatus in the continuity of Hinduism. In the case of living organism, such as Hinduism is, hiatus is another name of death and no true Hindu would countenance a heterogenetic reform or a sectarian movement which is necessarily fatal to the unbroken continuity of its *elan-vital*. This *elan-vital* of Hinduism is grounded in its ancient scriptures, the *Vedas*, the Six metaphysical Treatises, the *Puranas* and the socio-religious codes, called, *Smrtis*. When Gautam, the Buddha, repudiated the eternal and inerrant character of the Veda, it is obvious that he had the ceremonial and liturgical, the earlier parts of the Veda in mind and not altogether the speculations on Depth Psychology, Epistemology and Ontology of the later Vedas, called the *Upanisads*, of which the teachings of Buddhism are themselves a derivative. Since his teachings did not pretend to cover or affect the socio-political sphere of the Hindu activities he, quite wisely, did not repudiate, whatever scriptural texts at that time provided socio-ethical normative guidance to his people. He merely claimed to provide a new technique, which

²² Charles Eliot, Sir, *op. cit.* II, p. 244.

he was careful to assert, was as old as human race itself, *eso dhammam sanatanam*,²³ for the training, purification and exaltation of the human mind, the aim of which was the attainment of gnosis, nirvana, as he called it. This is the sum total of his heterodoxy. Jainism belongs to the same category as Buddhism in this respect. It repudiated the Vedas in their entirety, but the religious technique which Jainism advocated was grounded in the most ancient of the Six metaphysical Treatises, the Sankhya. With regard to the socio-political life of the Hindus, it was as scrupulously non-interfering as Buddhism. The Jains are likewise careful to assert that their doctrine is no new innovation and is infact as ancient as the mountains. Their heterodoxy, therefore, too has well-defined limits set to itself and any repudiation of the caste system has never been well within their province. The three great *acharyas*, Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhava, scrupulously base their theologies and metaphysical systems on their interpretations and exigeses of a particular addendum to the Veda, the *Brahmasutras*. The sects which they have founded and the social implications of their practices, seek their validity from the Veda itself, and ex-hypothesis, therefore, they could not repudiate the caste system, which throughout the ages has been deemed as sanctioned by the Veda. The best that these *acharyas* and the movements that stemmed off their teachings, did or could do was some relaxation of caste rules here and there. Repudiation of the caste system as such was clearly unthinkable for them, even if they had any such desire, and they well knew that any such repudiation would be wholly out of order, within the context of Hinduism.

In short, all the so-called, attempts at repudiation or relaxation of the rigours of the caste system scrupulously confine themselves to spiritual spheres of man, carefully leaving the socio-economic spheres alone, This position is well recognised by all intelligent and well-informed Hindus, and the subtle, secretive Tantric texts sum it up unambiguously:

During the inner esoteric tantric ceremonies all castes are equally high caste.

²³ एसो धम्म सनातनम्

But in the everyday social world, every caste has its different and proper place.²⁴

Swami Dayanand, who founded the Arya Samaj movement in 1875, which the Census Report of 1911 calls, "the greatest religious movement in India of the past half century", was well aware of the true nature of the basic prescriptions of Hinduism and its doctrines in relation to the caste system, and therefore, instead of, pretending to support orthodox Hinduism as the Hindu heresiarchs had done in the past. He directly aimed at religious and social reforms. He had, however, clearly perceived that the very idea of social reformation implied apostacy in the context of the Hindu scheme of things and he thus asserted that what he taught and preached—most of which was clear innovation and demonstrable heresy was the doctrine of the Vedas, the meanings of which texts had been obscured to the imperfect understanding of mortals in this most imperfect epoch, the Kali Age, awaiting unravelling at the hands of some master-mind, such as, no doubt, he himself was, Long before Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) wrote out his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1922) and long before he promulgated and popularised the slogan at Cambridge (1930-33), that "the meaning is the use", Swami Dayanand sensed and tacitly accepted it, ignoring as only a funambulist master-mind would, its utter incompatibility with the basic implication of the doctrine of inerrancy and eternity of the Veda, the cornerstone of Hinduism and the anchorsheet of the Swami's teachings, that the meanings are self-subsisting entities which exist over and above the words that express them and the people who utter them. He therefore, asserted that the *Purusasukta* text in the *Rgveda*, when correctly interpreted, does not support a caste hierarchy by birth, but decrees a caste-hierarchy by "innate character, conduct and pre-disposition", *guna, karma, svabhava*²⁵ by which he meant something similar to the modern concepts of IQ, managerial character-roll, and psycho-analytical probe. The Hindu doctrine of the caste hierarchy as such he did not repudiate, but gave

²⁴ प्रवृत्ते भैरवेचक्रे सर्वे वर्णाः द्विजोत्तमाः ।

निवृत्ते भैरवेचक्रे सर्वे वर्णाः पृथक् पृथक् ॥

Mahanirvanatantra IX, 179.

²⁵ Dayanand Saraswati Swami, *Satyarthaprakasha* (Hindi), pp, 21-88

it a new genesis and base. If birth was not to be the regulator of this Hindu caste hierarchy—or organisation of the Aryan Society—as the great Swami himself would prefer to call it, then how was this eminently desirable social organisation to be set up and maintained? A careful study of his *magnum opus*, *Satyarthaprakasa*, the latter half of which from the Eleventh Chapter onwards, it would appear unfair to attribute to the personal authorship of a man of his high moral rectitude, good taste and personal integrity, leaves no doubt in mind that Dayanand contemplated a fully sovereign Aryan State whose primary duty it should be, through political coercion, to enforce the Hindu social organisation of caste hierarchy and to maintain it through state-controlled managerial agency, such as Plato had in mind in outlining the schemata of his *Republic*, or, in modern times, such as H.G. Wells had in mind while recommending a fourfold classification of human society into the Poitic, the Kinetic, the Dull and the Base, in his *Modern Utopia*. But although, till such time as this becomes possible the Arya Samaj heresy against the caste system remains essentially amorphous, the validation of a Police state, destructive of the bases of liberal democracy is seen as implicit in it:

Arya Samaj's original programme was a revival of the ancient Vedic religion but it has since been perceptibly modified and tends towards conciliating contemporary orthodoxy, for it now prohibits the slaughter of cattle, accords a partial recognition to caste, affirms its belief in Karma, and apparently approves a form of the Yoga philosophy, Though it is not yet accepted as a form of orthodox Hinduism, it seems probable that concessions on both sides will produce this result before long.²⁶

The formal inspiration behind the secular Republic of India and its Constitution is Mahatma Gandhi who is regarded by many Europeans, as by his own countrymen, as the truest representative of Hindu orthodoxy and tradition. This is far from true. He was neither well-versed in the ancient Hindu texts nor was he well-read in the modern literary output of the world. He professed faith in the fundamentals of the hoary Hindu religion and culture, but he was his own judge as to what these fundamentals were. His *ahimsa*, which

²⁶ Charles Eliot, Sir, *op. cit.*, pp. XVII-XVIII.

he quite arbitrarily equated with Pacifism, though ostensibly derived from the ancient Jain teachings, to which persuasion his parents and forefathers belonged, was, infact, an illdisguised adoption of Biblical Sermon on the Mount and the exegesis of it by Tolstoy. His anti-caste activities and preachings were unorthodox in the extreme from the viewpoint of Hindu scriptural doctrine and were obviously inspired by the ideas of the 19th century liberalism of the West. It was his burning sincerity and high flowing energy buttressed by the conditioning potency of modern Press and platform, that kept concealed these real roots of his life and teachings from the common mass of the Hindus who followed and trusted him with touching naivette and a childlike faith, though his westernised and western-educated lieutenants into whose hands fell the opportunity and the vast power that there is of controlling the government apparatus of this subcontinent of India, that is, Bharat, knew all the time of the real character of Gandhi's innovations and were in wholehearted sympathy with them, for, they were themselves rootless, westernised floatsam Hindus and not Hindus by faith. When Mahatma Gandhi, in about 1937, cut asunder and discarded his sacred thread and shingled off the uncut tuft of hair over his head, the two distinguishing marks of a high class Hindu, a *dvija*, it was his open revolt from the eternal and religious bases of the Hindu fourfold social order and metaphysical insights into the Reality in which it is rooted. When he persuaded his followers to clean their own floors and latrines, his aim was to cut at the very roots of the *jati* classification of socio-economic compartmentation of the Hindus. Unlike the reformers of the past, however, he was careful not to claim the validity of his practices from scriptural texts on which he knew he had turned his back.

The Constitution Act of India of 1950, quite wisely, follows up this policy of Mahatma Gandhi in not seeking to derive the validity of its political authority and powers to give new orientations to the bases of Hindu social order, from Hindu scriptural texts, which are the real sources of authority of a State fit to rule over the Hindus, for Hinduism includes the religious bases of the Hindu social Order and therefore, the Act claims to be secular. Otherwise, Article 15 of the

Act which disables the state apparatus from lending support, directly or indirectly to the classification of *varna* as well as *jati*, both²⁷ and Article 17 which declares untouchability illegal, could not become the law of the land.²⁸ Similarly, by Article 44, those who govern the country have assumed powers to transform the bases and foundations of the Hindu society through promulgation of a uniform Civil Code,²⁹ and these bases have been changed in consequence of the enactment of the Hindu Code by the Parliament in 1956, which carefully leaves Muslim Indian citizens alone but squarely strikes at the roots of the Sikh peasant society of agrarian base that rests on ancient, well-tried traditions.

That the impulses which expressed themselves in the activities of Mahatma Gandhi and which now inspire the secular laws of social reform of the Indian Parliament, seek to change the structure of the Hindu society in an equalitarian direction is not in doubt, but equally it is not in doubt that these laws and the social changes to which they tend to give birth, are invalid *qua* Hindu doctrine, and, therefore, constitute gross heresies. They are worse than heresies for they proceed on the wrong assumption that the age-old Hindu social institutes are secular laws repealable by a sovereign Lok Sabha, while in fact they are meta-legal in character to which all secular laws must

²⁷ Article 15 of the *Constitution of India* lays down that,

- (1) The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.
- (2) No citizen shall on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to,
 - (a) access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and place of public entertainment, or
 - (b) the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and place of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of state funds or dedicated to the use of the general public.

²⁸ Article 17 of the Act reads as follows, 'Untouchability' is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of 'untouchability' shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.

²⁹ Article 44 of the Act says;

"The state shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India."

conform if they are not to become repugnant and tyrannous. The Hindu doctrine does not contemplate alterations in the Hindu social structure through secular laws; on the contrary, it enjoins upon the State to employ all its powers to maintain in-tact the divinely ordained Hindu social hierarchy.

The sources of valid law dharma, are (1) the whole of the Veda, (2) the religious codes of law, the Smṛti, (3) those who thoroughly understand these two, and follow their precepts in their daily conduct, and also (4) the conscience of such as have acquired inner realisation of the truths of Hinduism, *sadhunamatma stustireva cha*.³⁰

The writer of these lines is not aware that the members of the Indian Parliament, or of the earlier constituent Assembly have, at any stage, claimed themselves to be the repository of all or any of these sources of law of Hinduism. Within the framework of Hinduism itself, as we have remarked elsewhere, the function of the State is not so much to regulate inter-social relationship of its citizens; its primary and basic function is to uphold and enforce the rules of the eternal Hindu social structure.

A king has been created to uphold the classes and stages of life, *varnanama shramana*, who all according to their pre-ordained station, do their various duties.³¹

Hinduism does not conceive the functions of the State in terms of legislation; it conceives of them in terms of protection, *raksha* protection from foreign invasion also, but primarily the protection of the Caste system and its socio-economic implications. A state which fails in this basic and primary duty, is, as the *Mahabharata* declares, 'no state at all and it should be destroyed like a mad dog'.³² In ancient

³⁰ वेदी ऽखिलो धर्ममूलं स्मृतिशले च तादृदाम् ।

आचारश्चैव साधूनामात्मस्तुष्टिरेव च ॥

Manavadharmashastra II. 6.

³¹ स्वे स्वे धर्मे निविष्टानां सर्वेषामनुपूर्वशः ।

वर्णनामा श्रमाणां च राजा मृष्टो ऽमिरक्षिता ॥

Ibid, VII. 35

³² *Mahabharate* (Kumbakonam edition), XIII. 96. 84-85.

times, as *Mahabharata* and various other Hindu texts recount, one king Vena had encouraged intercaste marriages and miscegenation, through some Hindu Code of his own secular authority and thus he created the great upheaval of 'Confusion of Castes', *shankaravarna*. The rishis, after remonstrating with him, felt obliged to murder him with their bare hands, "with blades of grass," as the account says, as a warning to the secular enthusiasm of a future Hindu State.

It must, therefore, be clearly understood that the emergence of an equalitarian social order is possible only from the ashes of the Hindu hierarchy of class and caste; it cannot be brought about by way of reform, no matter how ingeniously conceived or supported with what popular fervour. Modern political democracy is inimical to the basic postulates of this Hindu hierarchy, and institutions of liberal democracy in terms of Hinduism, thus, are inconceivable, for, one involves the tacit rejection of the other, and where the two seem or are made to appear to exist together, through some kind of *panchasila*, its foundation is necessarily hypocrisy or make believe, double-think.

We may now consider whether Sikhism offers any escape from this *cul-de-sac*.

We have made it clear already that the ultimate value of Sikhism is the same as that of the higher Hindu teachings enshrined in the latter addenda to the Vedas, the *Upanishads*, which is the realisation of Truth, a supra-knowledge state which is *advandva*, beyond the pair-of-opposites, or in the language of the Dialectics, a synthesis which is ultimate and absolute, incapable of generating any further antithesis. This ultimate Value, therefore, is at once the matrix and the measure of all other human values of Ethics, Ontology and Aesthetics. 'All laws, all rules of conduct which tend to retard the progress of individual and the Society towards this *summum bonum* are forbidden, those which are helpful to this progress, are legitimate'.³³ "The Vedas reveal a knowledge of the temporalia and the relative and, therefore, they imprecate mental fever and vain activity upon

³³ ਜਾਲਉ ਐਸੀ ਰੀਤਿ ਜਿਤੁ ਮੈਂ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਵੀਸਰੈ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਈ ਭਲੀ ਪਰੀਤਿ ਜਿਤੁ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੇਤੀ ਪਤਿ ਰਹੈ॥

Var Vadhans, MI, GGS.p.590.

mankind."³⁴ "The Vedas, their metaphysical theses, *shastras*, and the Codes of Law, the *smritis*, none of them are eternal, and thus, inerrant."³⁵ "The Codes of Laws, the *smritis*, which claim the status of true exegesis of the Vedas, are just chains that bind and purify human society."³⁶ "The rules of conduct which the *smritis* lay down and the philosophical bases which the *sastras* seek to provide for them, are not correlated to the ultimate Value."³⁷ "The social and the class duties which the Vedas decree and the other treatises expound, are just so much silly rot in so far as they are not calculates to do away with hypocrisy in conduct and ignorance of mind"³⁸, and thus, they are not grounded in the ultimate Value.

Sikhism, thus, makes it clear that the Vedas, and the *smritis* which are the ultimate and irrevocable sources of law for the Hindus and the Hindu Society, are not so for the Sikh Society, the human World Society, which is the aim and dream of Sikhism.

It is thus that Sikhism breaks the centuries-old ice which has strangled and stratified the progress of Hindu Society, and repudiates the Semitic concept of divinely codified laws, "no more than febrile human imagination,"³⁹ which had similarly congealed the true affluence of the soul of the ancient Semitic civilisations and has that of the Islamic Society. The path for the man-made laws, inspired by faith in and progress towards God as a powerful lever for

³⁴ ਤੂੰ ਗੁਣ ਬਾਣੀ ਬੇਦ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ॥ ਬਿਖਿਆ ਮੈਲੁ ਬਿਖਿਆ ਵਾਪਾਰੁ॥

Malar, M 3, *Ibid.*, p. 1262.

This text in the *Guru Granth* is just a free translation of a couplet in the *Bhagavadgita*:

³⁵ ਸਾਸਤ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਿਨਸਹਿਗੇ ਬੇਦਾ॥

Gauri, M 5, *Ibid.*, p. 237.

³⁶ ਬੇਦ ਕੀ ਪੁਤ੍ਰੀ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਭਾਈ॥ ਸਾਕਲ ਜੇਵਰੀ ਲੈ ਹੈ ਆਈ॥

Gauri Kabir, GGS, p.329.

³⁷ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਪੁੰਨ ਪਾਪ ਬੀਚਾਰਦੇ ਤਤੈ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਈ॥

Ramkali, M 3, Anand, *Ibid.*, p. 920.

³⁸ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਬੇਦੁ ਬਕੈ ਖੜੋ ਭਾਈ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਹੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ॥

ਪਾਖੰਡਿ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਚੁਕਈ ਭਾਈ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਮੈਲੁ ਵਿਕਾਰੀ॥

Sorathi, M I, *Ibid.*, 635.

³⁹ ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਇਫਤਰਾ ਭਾਈ॥

Tilang, Kabir, *Ibid.*, p. 727.

achievement of social justice and all-round human progress, has thus been truly made clear of obstructions and pitfalls.

Once this was done, Sikhism found itself free to attack directly the class-ridden caste hierarchy of the Hindus.

"The teachings of the Gurus, the Sikhism, verily destroy the superstitions relating to *varna*, *jati* and other caste classifications."⁴⁰

"All the four *varnas* must follow a common ethical code of conduct."⁴¹ "All human beings have equal social right and none must be discriminated against."⁴² "True conscience of mankind giveth the verdict: birth and caste do not signify."⁴³ "Recognise the spiritual dignity of the individual as such and do not look for his caste, for in the basic reckoning caste distinctions do not count."⁴⁴ In a word, Sikhism unreservedly repudiates the religious sanction or theological validity of birth distinctions, refuses to admit that there are any divinely ordained classes amongst mankind, denies that social gradation determines social ethics and civic obligations of individuals and unambiguously declares that, "class and caste distinctions are just so much nonsense";⁴⁵ all men are born equal for, men were not created from different parts of the Primæval man, but "all originate from the same Source, the Light of God, and therefore there are no high or low by birth,"⁴⁶ The Sikh Gurus again and again revert to this topic, no doubt realising its extreme importance to the social and spiritual revolution which they preached, and declare that "the doctrine

⁴⁰ ਜਾਤਿ ਬਰਨ ਕੁਲ ਸਹਸਾ ਚੁਕਾ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਬੀਚਾਰੀ॥

Sarang, M I, *Ibid.*, p. 1198.

⁴¹ ਖੜੀ ਬਾਹਮਣ ਸੂਦ ਵੈਸ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਚਹੁ ਵਰਨ ਕਉ ਸਾਝਾ॥

Suhi, MS, GGS, p. 747.

⁴² ਸਭੇ ਸਾਝੀਵਾਲ ਸਦਾਇਨਿ ਤੂੰ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਦਿਸਹਿ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਜੀਉ॥

Majh, M 5, *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁴³ ਜਾਤਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਨਹ ਪੂਛੀਐ ਸਚ ਘਰੁ ਲੇਹੁ ਬਤਾਇ॥

Prabhati M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 1330.

⁴⁴ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਜੋਤਿ ਨ ਪੂਛਹੁ ਜਾਤੀ ਆਗੈ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਹੇ॥

Asa, M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 349.

⁴⁵ ਫਕਤ ਜਾਤੀ ਫਕਤੁ ਨਾਉ॥ ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆ ਇਕਾ ਛਾਉ॥

Sri Rag M 1, *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁴⁶ ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੇ ਮੰਦੇ॥

Prabhati Kabir, *Ibid.*, 1349

institutes of class gradation and untouchability, *varnavarna* are ungodly and against the Will of God, for He giveth no arbitrary and advantage to one over another."⁴⁷

It is this doctrine, the Sikh doctrine, that truly repudiates the bases as well as the institutes of the Hindu caste system and lays down secure foundations on which the traditions of a liberal democracy may be reared and the superstructure of an equalitarian society may be raised, in which social justice is secured by secular laws, the justness of which is guaranteed by the refined and awakened conscience of the community. It is this doctrine alone which can impart vitality to political life and civic consciousness in India, by lending significance to such concepts as 'nationality', and 'citizenship', which significance, as it is, belongs in India to social divisions of caste that have no uniform character, being sometimes religious, sometimes tribal and sometimes occupational. Indeed, the present leaders of India appear to be, by no means altogether ignorant, of the basic conflicts that beset a modern democratic political structure raised on the traditional and age-old doctrines of Hinduism, but either through wilfulness or ignorance, they seem to have failed to recognise the dangers that are implicit in a practice at loggerheads with theory. Or, perhaps, they hope that as time passes, the theory will, imperceptibly but surely, adjust itself with practice and they may feel encouraged by the false analogy of the historical transition of Brahmanism of the Pre-Christian centuries into the Hinduism of the early centuries of the Christian era, which Hinduism, for the first time appears on the stage, in its full fledged final shape, during the Gupta period of Indian history. The analogy is dangerously false, for, we know of no stage of this transition when the practice was not supported by scriptural doctrine, and we, therefore, cannot legitimately hope that in current times and in the future, it is the doctrine which will change to accommodate the social changes being brought about by the secular law, and that these secular laws will not once again

⁴⁷ ਵਰਨਾ ਵਰਨ ਨ ਭਾਵਨੀ ਜੇ ਕਿਸੈ ਵਡਾ ਕਰੇਇ॥

Sri Rag, M I, *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁴⁸ *Chullavagga*, IX.1.9.

meet with the fates of king Vena at the hands of the age-old doctrines of the rishis. In this connection, the melancholy but pregnant expression, *dhumakalikam* employed in the Pali text,⁴⁸ expressive of the fears of Buddhist monks at the death of Gautam, the Buddha, that the Master's Discipline might last no longer than the smoke of his funeral pyre, inevitably springs to mind to depress all, who like this writer are in sympathy with much of what the present rulers of India dream of and aim at. Or, may be, and this seems more probable, for our present leaders are steeped in the history of the West and Western influence, they believe that just as modern Europe, of which the U.S.A. institutions are but a reflex, has freed itself from Christian Church authority and its obscurantism during the past three or four centuries, without destroying the fundamentals of Christianity, and has at the same time, established the right of the secular authority to regulate social inter-relationship and growth, the same pattern may be followed by India, with confidence and safety. This seems to be a tempting line of thought till two points are understood clearly. One, that the transition from the Church Christianity to the modern secular Christianity has involved compromises, the true nature of which is not appaarent, but which are demonstrably tantamount to repudiation of certain quite fundamental doctrines of Christianity, of Biblical authority. Some of these fundamentals are involved in the supression of Christ's turning his cheek to the smiter, Paul's belief in the approaching end of the World, and also adoption of new social ideals, unwarranted by the New Testament, such as emancipation of women, sanction of matrimonial divorce and abolition of slavery. This transition was effected, not by the rule of the secular thumb, as some of our present leaders would, perhaps, like to think, but under the authority of a religious fiction which was given the name of the "Christian Conscience", but which, in fact, is simply the Will of the citizens of a state as expressed and enforced through the democratic process. This "Christian Conscience" usurped the throne of the Church of Christ at Rome as a consequence of Lutheran revolt of Protestantism in the 16th century, while it took two hundred years for the Christian-dom, two centuries of blood baths and spiritual agony, to accord a semblance of legitimacy to this "Christian Conscience," so that the

secular authority may employ it as its instrument of social reform. In India no analogous source of law of divine authority has been evolved to legitimatise the secular law, which now is made to reign as naked secular Will over domains which do not *de jure* belong to it. The west European example, therefore, is dangerously misleading, if this is the beacon light that has lured our present leaders onwards. Secondly, the West European experiment of altering the bases of Christianity is, as yet, much too young to afford a safe guidance to India. Already, symptoms of agony, consequent upon spiritual impoverishment, are more than visible in the West European soul and this process of social disintegration is causing serious concern to thinking minds, who are not sure whether the way to recovery of social and individual spiritual health does not lie in retracing the steps backwards to the original bases of their Society. That which has given the Hindu Society a stable social equilibrium, which could withstand successive shocks of foreign invasions and domination over thousands of years, cannot be, and cannot be replaced by, the everchanging secular will of a few individuals who control and regulate those who assemble at Delhi through quinquennial adult franchise device, without exposing the whole Indian humanity to perils, in the long run.

The more this whole matter is considered carefully and dispassionately, the clearer it becomes that the Hindu race, at the present historic moment, a moment of its greatest achievement of newly-won political independence and of its greatest spiritual crisis born out of maladjustment between its ancient traditions, age-old religious doctrines and the requirements of modern political life, finds itself on the horns of a dilemma: to be or not to be, that is the question. Whether to remain true to its traditional roots and pervert its political life in defiance of the spirit of the times, which is demonstrably ruinous, or whether to renounce the fundamentals with a view to achieve political vigour and social health in the context of modern times, which is clearly suicidal. The desire of some of the present leaders of the country to have a bit of both the worlds, as is epitomised in the Constitution Act of India, is a chimera and a mirage, equipollently disastrous, If the essentials and the fundamental spirit of Hinduism must be saved, without running the risk of losing political vitality

and civic health, Sikhism is the only conceivable solution of the dilemma. Whether breadth of vision and courage of action, or narrowmindedness and aleatory obstinacy are to characterise those who would lead and guide the country, only the future can tell.

A true and wise ruler must honour and preserve that which is fundamental to the Society, for this alone can confer enduring social stability and human happiness, the insurance of which is the sole title of a ruler to his exalted position.⁴⁹

“ तेन धर्मात्तरश्चायं कृतो लोको महाऽऽर्तमना ।
रजिताश्च प्रजाः सर्वस्तिन राजेनि शब्दते ॥

Shantiparva Mahabharata, VII.33.

CHAPTER XIII

ARDAS OR THE SIKH CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

Ardas is a Sanskrit word, from the root, 'ard' to ask, to beg, to pray and 'as' means, wish, hope, desire. To ask for what you desire is *ardas*, that is prayer, though some Sikh scholars are inclined to the view that *ardas* is just a Punjabi form of the Persian expression, '*arzdasht*, a petition, presented to a state authority by a citizen. Prayer to God is a basic religious activity in Sikh religion. "He, who has the power to confer fearlessness and solace, before Him, pray,"¹ "God is omniscient, He is omnipotent. He can right that which hath gone wrong; Nanak, therefore, advises, in humility stand up and pray before Him alone and none other,"² "In all difficulties pray to God for, verily, God helpeth man out of his troubles."³ "He who is the Overlord of the Universe; He, who is the King of kings; He who governs all the worlds; He who is Omnipotent and Almighty, before that true Light pray that He may end your sufferings."⁴

The institution of congregational prayer or even prayer proper is almost wholly alien to Hinduism and Hindu religious tradition. The

¹ ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ਭੈ ਭੰਜਨੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਆਗੈ ਕਰਿ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ॥

Sri Rag, M.S. GGS, p. 44.

² ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਕਰੇ ਆਪਿ ਆਪੇ ਆਣੈ ਰਾਸਿ॥
ਤਿਸੈ ਅਗੈ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਖਲਿਓ ਕੀਚੈ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ॥

Maru Var, M2, *Ibid.*, p. 1093

³ ਕੀਤਾ ਲੋਤੀਐ ਕੰਮੁ ਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਹਿ ਆਖੀਐ॥
ਕਾਰਜ ਦੇਇ ਸਵਾਰਿ...

Var Sri Rag, M.1, *Ibid.*, p.91.

⁴ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਵਸਿ ਖਾਨ ਸੁਲਤਾਨ॥ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਵਸਿ ਹੈ ਸਗਲ ਜਹਾਨ॥
ਜਾ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਹੋਇ॥ ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਇ॥
ਕਹੁ ਬੇਨੰਤੀ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਾਹਿ...

Gauri Guareri, M 5, *Ibid.*, p. 182.

basic activity and rite of the Vedic religion or Brahmanism is *yajna* or sacrifice, the essence of which is persuasion of a deity to do what the sacrifice desires. It is the right technique, the knowhow, which is of the essence of a *yajna*, and not the mental attitude which is the essence of prayer. The basic activity to Hinduism is *puja* or worship which is generally that of a sanctified icon, the *archa* in which divine life has been inspired through specified rituals. *Puja* is not an act of prayer; it is an act of homage, including that of entertainment. A devotee may ask for a boon at the feet of the idol, *prarthana*, but the fulfilment of this wish is clearly contingent upon the efficacy of his worship. The god's feet are washed and he is offered betelnuts, as would be done in the case of an honoured guest. The icon is ceremoniously awakened from his bed in the morning with music and it is offered flower garlands, incense and food, of which it eats the subtle part, leaving the gross food, *sit prasada*, for the worshipper. In larger temples, the icon-god is taken to bed at night to join his wives or *shaktis*, and he is entertained by dancers, the *devadasis*, during the day. In the comparatively modern Vedic culture of Tantrism, the aniconical formalised deity is simply compelled, through appropriate rites, to perform what the agent desires. In all this, the basic elements of prayer are essentially lacking, for, while the compulsive coercive technology of *tantra* is magic and not religion, proper to which domain the prayer belong, the petitionary *prarthana* is beseeching on the human level and not tapping the primal Eternal Energy behind the created show, the *samsara*, which is the essence of prayer, and for this reason, *ardas* cannot be confused with 'arzdast' does not technically mean a humble petition presented to a State authority cringing for favours. In the administrative parlance of the Sultanate of Medieval India :

every soldier of the empire was expected to come to Delhi for review or 'arz', when after examination by the *Amir-i-Arz* (Minister of War) he would get his salary and the cost of his horse and equipment.⁵

⁵ Muhammad Habib, *Politics and Society during the Early Medieval Period*, I, p. 80.

The basic activity of Buddhism is meditation and that of Jainism *tapas*, austerities, both of which are essentially non-theistic, solitary and individualistic practices and Buddhism and Jainism being essentially a-social religions, the question of a congregational practice of religion does not arise in their case. Indeed, in Buddhist *chaityas*. Jain monasteries and larger Hindu temples, the devotees do congregate to listen to religious discourses and exposition of religious texts, but this is not a religious activity as such; it is only a subsidiary activity to the practice of religion.

Thus, congregational practice as a basic activity of religion, is likewise foreign to early Hinduism, though it developed in some medieval sects, such as those of Chaitanya and Vallabhacharya. Ordinarily, a Hindu worshipper goes to the temple alone or with friends and family, makes his offerings and departs. Sometimes he may linger there to watch the act of worship by regular officiants in a well-endowed temple, but he and others form an audience and not a congregation.

The basic activity of Sikhism is *simran*, communion with God through the yogic discipline of Name; its obligated and mandatory context is *seva*, loving service of fellow beings and prayer is the prescribed vitality of this activity. Prayer supports *simran* which evolves and matures in social context. Congregational prayer is, thus, an essentially Sikh institution in India.

The Sikh congregational prayer is a product of communal composition, which has developed through various stages of the Sikh history quite upto present times, by common consensus of the Sikh community. The opening part of this prayer, relating to the invocation of the nine predecessor Gurus, is an excerpt from a Punjabi composition of Guru Gobind Singh. It is called, *Var Sri Bhagauti Ji Ki*, which is an abbreviated metrical version of a chapter of *Markande yapurana* called "*Durgasaptasati*," seven hundred verses of which have been condensed into 55 stanzas. The story of the text describes a titanic struggle during the hoary age of mythology, between the forces of Evil and Good, in which divine aid weighs the scales in favour of the Good. The opening stanza of this translated composition is the original composition of Guru Gobind Singh, as the traditional *mangalacharana*, Invocation, and is not a part of the adopted version.

At the time of the prayer, the whole of the congregation must stand up in humility, with palms joined in the oriental fashion, facing the throne of the *Guru Granth*, which is usually there, but when it is not there, the whole congregation must face any one direction of the compass. Any suitable member of the congregation, irrespective of sex or social station, for, there is no ordained priestly class amongst the Sikhs, may lead the prayer. The leader then recites the prayer, pronouncing it audibly and in measured tones and the rest of the congregation formally associate themselves with the prayer by repeating in unison. 'Glory be to God' (*Waheguru*), at prescribed intervals.

This is a translation of the Sikh congregational prayer.⁶

ਅਰਦਾਸ॥

ੴ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਵਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ੧੦॥ ਪਿਥਮ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਸਿਮਰਿਕੈ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਧਿਆਇ॥ ਫਿਰ ਅਗੰਦ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੈ ਹੋਈ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਅਰਜਨ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਨੇ ਸਿਮਰੈ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿ ਕਿਸ਼ਨ ਧਿਆਈਐ ਜਿਸ ਡਿਠੇ ਸਭਿ ਦੁਖਿ ਜਾਇ॥ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸਿਮਰੀਐ ਘਰ ਨਉਨਿਧਿ ਆਵੈ ਧਾਇ॥ ਸਭ ਬਾਈ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਦਸਵੇਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ॥ ਸਭ ਬਾਈ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਜੇਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪਾਠ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ!

ਪੰਜਾਂ ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ, ਚੌਧਾਂ ਸਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦਿਆਂ, ਚਾਲੀਆਂ ਮੁਕਤਿਆਂ, ਹਠੀਆਂ ਜਪੀਆਂ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਿਆ, ਵੰਡ ਛਕਿਆ, ਦੇਗ ਚਲਾਈ, ਤੇਗ ਵਾਹੀ, ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਅਣਡਿੱਠ ਕੀਤਾ, ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ, ਸਚਿਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ! ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ!

ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸੀਸ ਦਿੱਤੇ, ਬੰਦ ਬੰਦ ਕਟਾਏ, ਖੋਪਰੀਆਂ ਲੁਹਾਈਆਂ, ਚਰਖੜੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਚੜ੍ਹੇ, ਆਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਚਿਰਾਏ ਗਏ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਈ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀਆਂ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ, ਧਰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਾਰਿਆ, ਸਿੱਖੀ ਕੋਸਾਂ ਸੁਆਸਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਬਾਹੀ, ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ! ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ!

ਪੰਜਾਂ ਤਖਤਾਂ, ਸਰਬਤ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ!

ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਹੈ ਜੀ, ਸਰਬੱਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਚਿਤ ਆਵੇ, ਚਿਤ ਆਵਨ ਕਾ ਸਦਕਾ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਹੋਵੇ। ਜਹਾਂ ਜਹਾਂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਤਹਾਂ ਤਹਾਂ ਰਵਿਆ ਰਿਆਇਤ, ਦੇਗ ਤੇਗ ਫਤਹ, ਬਿਰਦ ਕੀ ਪੈਜ, ਪੰਥ ਕੀ ਜੀਤ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਇ, ਖਾਲਸੇ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਬੋਲ ਬਾਲੇ, ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ!

ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾਨ, ਕੇਸ ਦਾਨ, ਰਹਿਤ ਦਾਨ, ਬਿਬੇਕ ਦਾਨ, ਵਿਸਾਹ ਦਾਨ, ਭਰੋਸਾ ਦਾਨ, ਦਾਨਾਂ ਸਿਰ ਦਾਨ, ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਇਸਨਾਨ, ਚੌਕੀਆਂ, ਝੰਡੇ, ਖੁੰਗੇ ਜੁਗੇ ਜੁਗੇ ਅਟੋਲ, ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਜੈਕਾਰ, ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ!!!

ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਨੀਵਾਂ, ਮਤ ਉਚੀ, ਮਤ ਦਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਆਪਿ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ। ਹੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਆਪਣੇ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਸਦਾ ਸਹਾਈ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਜੀਓ! ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਗੁਰਧਾਮਾਂ ਦੇ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਥ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਛੋੜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਖੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਦਰਸਨ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਤੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਦਾ ਦਾਨ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਬਖਸ਼ੋ।

ਹੇ ਨਿਸਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮਾਣ, ਨਿਤਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਤਾਣ, ਨਿਓਟਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਓਟ, ਸੱਚੇ ਪਿਤਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ! ਆਪ ਦੇ ਹਜ਼ੂਰ..... ਦੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਹੈ ਜੀ।

ਅੱਖਰ ਵਾਧਾ ਭੁਲ-ਚੁਕ ਮਾਫ਼ ਕਰਨੀ। ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਰਾਸ ਕਰਨੇ।

ਸੇਈ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਮੇਲ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮ ਚਿਤ ਆਵੇ। ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ, ਤੇਰੇ ਭਾਣੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ।"

ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਉਪ੍ਰੰਤ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਅੱਗੇ ਅਦਬ ਨਾਲ ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਖੜੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ-

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ,
ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹ"

--Reproduced from *Rahit Maryada*, Pub. by Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Sri Amritsar, n.d., pp. 11-12.

I, Formless-form, To God, the abiding Victory.

Var Sri Bhaguati composition of the 10th King.

To begin with, we invoke the Divine Spirit of God and we remember Guru Nanak (This Spirit) which then inspired Guru Angad, Amar Das, and Ram Das.

We call upon the Gurus, Arjun, Hargobind, and Hari Rai. Let us invoke the blessed Harikrsan whose vision heals all pains.

Let us call upon Guru Teg Bahadur so that the kingdom of Heaven,⁷ may come to earth.

May, (the God and the Gurus) help us everywhere. Tenth King, Guru Gobind Singh, may he help us everywhere.

The Spirit of all the Ten Kings enshrined in the visible Body and the Word of the *Guru Granth*, concentrate on that and say, Sires, 'Glory be to God.'⁸

'The congregation: 'Glory be to God,'

Five beloved Ones, Four Princes,⁹ Forty Redeemed Ones,¹⁰ those who have kept constant remembrance of God, those who renounced the sense-pleasures, those who have constantly lived in the Divine Presence, those who have loved their neighbours by sharing their possessions with them, those who have turned a blind eye to the faults and failings of others, those who have assuaged the hunger and want of the hungry and the needy, those who have persevered in their fight in the cause of Justice, concentrate your minds on the struggles and achievements of those, O, revered members of the Order of the Khalsa, and say, 'Glory be to God.'

⁷ Literally, "the Nine Treasures of life" which signify worldly abundance and material plenty. These are the traditional Nine Treasures of Hindu concept: (1) *padma*, gold and silver, (2) *Mahapadma*, precious jewels, (3) *makar*, recognition and honour by the State, *rachap*, trade in silk, brocade and textiles, (5) *mukand*, objects of fine arts, (6) *rund*, gold ornaments and utensils, (7) *nil*, trade in pearls etc, (8) *sankha*, delicious meals, and (9) *varach*, wealth in billions through wizardry in finance.

⁸ Literally, "say sires, *sri Waheguru*."

⁹ The four sons of Guru Gobind Singh who all gave their lives for the cause of Religion.

¹⁰ Forty Sikhs who after a momentary wavering of faith, sacrificed their lives in the cause of Religion in A.D. 1704 at the battlefield of Muktsar, now in the Indian Punjab and were redeemed by the Guru in the battle-field.

The congregation : 'Glory be to God',

The Singhs of both the sexes who courted martyrdom in the cause of Religion and underwent unspeakable sufferings of being dismembered alive, scalped alive, broken on the wheels, sawed alive and boiled alive and those who made sacrifices in the service of the centres of the Sikh religion, the *Gurdwaras*, but never wavered in their faith and remained steadfast in the cause of Sikhism to the last hair of their body and to their last breath, O, revered members of the Khalsa Order, concentrate your minds on the glorious deeds of those, and utter, 'Glory be to God'.

The congregation : 'Glory be to God'.

Think of the Four [Five] High Seats of Sikh Authority, the Thrones of Religion,¹¹ and all the centres from where the good Religion is preached, and say, 'Glory be to God'.

¹¹ There are and legitimately remain only four High Seats of Sikh Authority, the *takhts* and a recent innovation of a fifth *takht* set up by ignorant heresiarchs and new controllers of the official Board of Management of the Sikh Historical Shrines (SGPC) is altogether repugnant to and unwarranted by the true Sikh doctrine or the metaphysical postulates and mythological traditions of our ancestors, the Hindus.

Takht is a Persian word signifying 'the Imperial throne,' a concept of total and all-pervasive focus of worldly temporal power such as was supposed to inhere in the *shahinshah*, the emperor, of the Achaemenian throne. *Ex-hypothesi*, there cannot be more than one *takht* in the empire and indeed, in the entire world, for, a true and logically whole empire must tend to acquire a total ecumenical sway and the doctrine of co-existence of more than one *takht*, which is a true *takht*, is a self-stultification. But since the Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty, *miri piri*, envisages a sway over the minds and souls of mankind, the entire world and does not contemplate a coercive bondage of the bodies of men as the imperial throne does, it validates and promulgates a plurality of *takht*, coexistent, coeval and complementary.

The concept of these *takhts*, thrones of Double Sovereignty, originates from a Hindu tradition of religious dominion which is grounded in metaphysical postulates of ancient acceptance.

Dominion of religion in the world of phenomena is bound up with the concept of 'space' and the Hindu 'space' is a flat four-directional extension, innocent of Einsteinian curvature of depth impregnated into it by the progression of 'Time'. This Hindu 'pure space' is conceptual *sankalpabhu*.

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independent of the progression of 'Time' as both are viewed as distinct categories of mind imposed upon the sensibilia, a metaphysical insight formulated at least two thousand years earlier than Immanuel Kant, "Verily the Space arise out of the Mind" is an Upanishadic formulation: *etasmad atama akas smmbhutih.*, says the *Taittréyopanishad* (II, I). This 'space' is four-directional, east, west, north, south. It is this 'space' in which is encompassed the entire phenomenal world *samsara*, the reality that is appearances and the religion as it impinges upon the minds of men while it is permanently there in the souls of all men-flourishes in relation to this 'space'. The spread and sway of religion in this world, therefore, must be comprehended and as four-directional.

Again, numbers' occupy a prominent place in Hindu occultism and the concept of 'numbers' permeates a great deal many branches of Hindu speculation. Infinities are of particular fascination, circumscribed in cyclic concepts of Time and cosmic Ages of the universe. The branch of knowledge, Numerology, *ganati* is conceived as a branch of Ontology, and the numeral '1', as the first signature and word in the Sikh scripture is grounded in this modality of Hindu metaphysical thought.

According to this Hindu Numerology, while the symbol 'zero', (*shunya*) being the absence of all, comprises all things, the number, 'one' is the number of Divinity, of the fundamental symbol, *lingam*, of the Sun, signifying brightness, light, unity, wisdom. Number 'four' in this system of thought is the perfect number, as it represents all the four directions of the space *Satapathabrahmana* tells us that, 'as the cow requires four feet, so the *yajna*, sacrificial must have four Vedas and four officiants'. Commenting on the description of the 'mind-stuff' in the Upanishads as *Chaturpada*, Sankara, explains, "like the four feet of a cow."

These concepts about the nature of the 'space' and numerological significations are then linked-up with the spread and sway of religion in the world in the Hindu tradition and history, and that explains why whenever a Hindu sect or denomination of religion has laid claim to ecumenical status, it has set up or recognised four chief or primary places of its reverential *focii*. In the *Guru Granth* it is to this mode of understanding of the matter that a reference exists to the omnipotent omnipresence of God: *chatur disa kino balu apna GGS*, p. 681 and it is according to this mode of thought that in the ancient Vedic tradition four *rajatirathas*, royal centres of holiness, were recognised, such as *Puskararaj*, *Prayagaraj*, *Kasiraj* to each of which one of the cardinal directions, E.W.N. or S. was assigned. Likewise, in Brahmanism, *chaturdham*, four residences of the gods, Jaganath (E), Dwarikavati (W), Badrinath(N) and Ramesvaram (S) are recognised. Sankaracharya established *chaturmatha*, four abbeys, to represent his true interpretation of the Vedas, *Vedanta*, such as Jaganmatha (E) Dwarikamatha (W) Badrimatha (N) and Sringerimatha (S)

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Of Vaisnavite Hinduism, there are recognised *chaturpuri*, the four holy towns beloved of the God, Jagannath Puri, Dwarikapuri and so on. Gautam, the Buddha, before his *mahaparinirvana*, the great demise, specified four places, that of his birth, his enlightenment, his first sermon and his demise as the places worthy of homage for the Buddhists, Lumbanivan, Gaya, Sarnath and Kushinar, representing four directions of the Hindu 'space', and hence signifying ecumenical claim.

It was to this ancestry of religious ecumenical claim that Guru Har Gobind, the founder of the first Sikh *takht* accorded recognition when he established in concurrence with Baba Sri Chand, the elder son of Guru Nanak and the founder of the *Udasi* sect of Sikh monks, four Ascetic-fires, *dhuans*, under the supreme pontiffship of his own son, Baba Gurditta, with a view to preach Sikhism as a World Religion. Baba Gurditta is acclaimed by the *Udasis* as 'the Seal of the Glory of the this world and the next', *din duni di tikki*, that clearly adumbrates the true status and functions of the Sikh *takhts*.

Again, there are recognised two categories of holy places in our Hindu tradition, *sthapt*, established or appointed and *svayambhu*, over-there, self-existent. A centre of holiness may be set up or created by historical accident, association or appropriate ceremonies, or it may be there since the beginning of creation in the unseen world, but may be discovered through a sign, accident, or authoritative pointing out. There are temples of Visnu and Shiva of hoary antiquity that were so discovered through a royal dream or yogic flash and then magnificent buildings and idols were set up there and there are temples that were definitely 'established' at a contingent point of time, before which establishment they were not.

It is in this context that the significance and validity of *chartakht*, the Five High seats of Sikh Authority, must be appreciated. These *takhts* do not originate and are not validated by historical occurrences, though they may be accidentally associated with the birth or sojourn of a Sikh Guru or it may be the case, that as *Akaltakht*, it was 'build-up' and signified by a Sikh Guru. These *takhts* essentially are and remain *svayambhu*, ever-there, and nobody or no contingent occurrence has created them.

There cannot be more than four *takhts* because '4' is a perfect number, ecumenical in signification and grounded in the ancient metaphysical postulates of our race, while number, '5' is *not* a perfect number, and it is not a significator of 'space' or territory while a *takht* must be such a significator. '5' reduces much diversity to meaningful measure and hence signifies men and things, *panchajanya panchatattva*, *panchagavya* etc. and '*panj-takht*' is a silly and unwarranted concept.

Nor the word, "*takht*" inscribed on some seal used by the keepers of a historical Sikh shrine, such as occurs in the seal preserved at Damdameh Sahib in Punjab, can make the place a *takht* a 'High seat of Sikh Authority' of the

(To continue)

The Congregation : 'Glory be to God'.

First, we pray on behalf of all the creatures of God.¹²

May the Presence of God be progressively felt in the hearts of all the sentient creatures, and may the whole Creation become happy and prosperous thereby. (Then) may God shower His blessings upon and grant protection to each and every member of the Order of the Khalsa, wherever he or they are.

May the supplies of the Khalsa ever remain replenished.

May the Sword of the Khalsa be ever victorious.

May the Royal title of 'the Khalsa' be universally recognised and honoured.¹³

May victory attend upon all just endeavours of the *Panth*, the Khalsa Commonwealth. May the arms and armaments be our constantly. May the Order of the Khalsa achieve ever-expanding progress and supremacy. Sires, say, 'Glory be to God.'

(Continued)

category to which the traditional four *takhts* belong. In this seal the word, "*takht*" occurs in its dictionary meaning, in the sense that a royal personage, technically a Sikh Guru, rested, sat or held audience here. Indeed, the inscription on this particular seal itself makes the matter quite clear, when it says that it is the seal pertaining to "*takht, Jagah Guru Gobind Singh Ji*," that is the throne-locus of the place where Guru Gobind Singh stayed'. On the basis of such a citation to declare the holy Sikh shrine; Damdameh Sahib as the fifth High seat of Sikh Authority is simply absurd. Bhai Kahan Singh also in his *Mahankosh, the Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature*, gives precisely these as the true meanings of the word "*Takht*" as it occurs in Sikh writings and he is categorical that there are only four valid Sikh *takhts* (p. 1386). At Kiratpur, there is a historical Sikh shrine known as *Takht Sahib* but it has never been deemed or claimed as one of the High Seats of Sikh Authority.

Damdameh Sahib now in the Bhatinda District of Punjab, as a holy and important Sikh shrine of great historical importance and sanctity., but it is not the fifth *takht*, in the meaning of a High seat of Sikh Authority, and there is no human authority now or ever, which can creat new *takhts* valid in and acceptable to the Sikh doctrine.

¹² *Sarbat Khalsa* signifies the whole humanity and all the sentient creatures, in the Sikh idiom, in contradistinction to *Samuh Khalsa* which signifies all the members of the Order of the Khalsa. This distinction is vital, though these terms are sometimes confusedly and interchangeably used.

¹³ बिरुद, *Birad*, Sanskrita, *biruda*, means, royal and imperial titles and surnames, regal pretensions and claims. The Title of *Khalsa* is a *biruda*, (बिरुद)

The Congregation: 'Glory be to God.'

May God grant to the Sikhs, the gift of Faith, the gift of the uncut Hair, the gift of Discipline, the gift of Discrimination, the gift of Mutual Trust, the gift of Selfconfidence and the Supreme Gift of all gifts, the gift of communion with God, the Name, and may Sikhs freely centre around and dip in the holy Lake of Amritsar.

May the government-centres, the banners, the cantonements of the Khalsa ever remain inviolate.

May the Cause of Truth and Justice prevail everywhere and at all times.

Sires, utter, 'Glory be to God.'

The congregation: 'Glory be to God.'

May the passions in the hearts of the Sikhs remain calm and their reason flow clear, and may the reason always be guided by the Light of God.

God, Almighty, our Protector and Helper ever, restore to us the right and privilege of unhindered management and free service of and access to the Nankana Sahib, and other centres of the Sikh Religion, the *gurdwaras*, out of which we have been forcibly evicted.

God, the Helper of the helpless, the strength of the weak, the Support of the fallen, the true Father of all, Lord God.

(Here, the specific purpose and occasion for the prayer is stated by the officiant in suitable terms and the blessings and aid of God are beseeched.)

God, forgive us our remissnesses. Extend Thy Helping Hand to all and everyone.

Grant us the company of those who may help keep Thy Name fresh in our hearts.

May Thy Name, the Religion preached by Nanak, prevail and prosper forever and forever.

May Thy will be done wherein lies the good of all.¹⁴

¹⁴ The ancient Vedic prayer of the Aryan race is :*sarve janah Sukhino Bhavantu*, may all men have peaceful existence. This prayer asks for blessings of gods in favour of all the people, the members of the Aryan tribe and desires them to

(To continue)

The Khalsa is of God, and to Him the Victory.

(Here the whole congregation bow to God by touching the ground with their foreheads as is the oriental fashion, and then the whole congregation stand up and chant in unison the following two litanical couplets.)

- (1) The will of God hath ordained the Order of the Khalsa. This is the final commandment to all the Sikhs: accept *Granth* as the Guru.

Deem the revered *Guru Granth* as the Visible Body of all the Gurus.

He, who hath disciplined his mind shall behold confirmation thereof in the Revelation itself.

- (2) The Khalsa shall rule and none shall successfully defy them.

All shall have to petition for their alliance after bitter frustration, for the World shall eventually be redeemed through the protection that the Order of the Khalsa alone affords.¹⁵

(Continued)

exist in peace, without worldly pain and sorrow. It does not contemplate the entire humanity, nor the ultimate peace of the soul, for which the correct word is, *shantih*. The Buddhist prayer asks for or contemplates freedom from worldly pain and sorrow for all the sentient beings of the world, *sabbe sukho hoti*. The Sikh prayer on the other hand, asks of God Almighty neither freedom from worldly pain and sorrow, thus acknowledging that pain and sorrow are integral constituents of life as created by God, nor it circumscribes its application to clansmen, mankind or sentient beings of this earth. It refers to all pains and pleasures of all creatures whether of this planet, earth, or of the countless universes created by God, as necessary and integral attributes of all creatures of God and as ordained by the Will of God in a pattern that tends towards the maximum good for each and every creature in the end, and thus the Sikhs pray: *tere bhane sarbat ka bhala*; May Thy Will be done so that maximum good of all may come about. This is in sharp contrast to Occidental Christianity also which believes that immortality and happiness are entirely problems of human existence. St. Paul echoes the vulgar belief (*Corinthians*, ix, 9) that God cares not for the oxen.

¹⁵ ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੈ ਚਲਾਯੋ ਪੰਥ।

ਸਭ ਸਿੱਖਨ ਕਉ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਗਰੰਥ।

(To continue)

The whole congregation then shout a fullthroated cry of, *Sat sri Akal*, the Eternal God is the only Reality; and the prayer is over, and the whole congregation then take their seats.¹⁶

(Continued)

ਗੁਰੂ ਗਰੰਥ ਕੋ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ।

ਜਾ ਕਾ ਹਿਰਦਾ ਸੁਧ ਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮੇਂ ਲੇਹ।

or (ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੋ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਹੇ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਹ)

ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਆਕੀ ਰਹੇ ਨ ਕੋਇ।

ਖੁਆਰ ਹੋਇ ਸਭ ਮਿਲੈਗੇ ਬਚੈ ਸਰਨ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ।

Rahitnama Bhai Nand Lal; also

Gian Singh Giani, *Sri Guru Panth Prakash*, p. 353.

¹⁶ This translation has been made from the version of the congregational prayer approved by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar. This version, in substance and form, has been accepted and adopted by the generality of Sikhs, during the last three centuries.

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SUBJECT INDEX

Below are given main pages on which certain socio-politico-cum-religious concepts have been discussed, different cults, creeds and institutions appraised of, and gods, goddesses and a few mytho-legendary figures quoted

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